

CIVILIPEDIA



OPEN PRINTABLE
VERSION OF THE SITE

X

ARTICLES



PODCASTS



SHORT STORIES



POEMS



IN THE NEWS



Civility: si-vil-i-tee noun, plural, ci-vil-i-ties

1. Courteous behavior or expression; politeness.
2. An individual act or a manner of behaving which conforms to social conventions of propriety.

1 2 3 4

> FEATURED PHOTO

FEATURED NEWS ITEM

FEATURED ARTICLE

FEATURED LITERATURE

CIVILITY MATRIX



SIGN UP FOR CIVILITY TRAINING TODAY!

It's never too late (or too early) to brush up on your respect, compassion and etiquette!

CLICK HERE

FORUM



PHOTOS



CIVILITY IN HISTORY



DID YOU KNOW?



FACTS AND STATISTICS



CIVILIPEDIA

Printable version

With support from:

COPRSAQ

Le Comité d'orientation pédagogique du
réseau scolaire anglophone du Québec

The Leadership Committee for
English Education in Québec

LCEEQ

CIVILITY DEFINITION

Civility definition 1

CIVILITY MATRIX

2

ARTICLES

Are We Really Less Civil Than Ever? 3

Workplace Civility: Getting Ahead With Courtesy and Kindness 5

Civility in Sports? 8

PODCASTS

Never Say Never 11

A New Direction 15

Confucian Riddles 19

SHORT STORIES

Little Red Riding Hood 23

The Ceremony of Forgiveness 25

The Kid Nobody Could Handle 29

POEMS

Girls Can We Educate We Dads? 40

The Private Life of Parks 41

Telephone Conversation 42

A Victorian Hangman Tells His Love 44

IN THE NEWS

Hoping New Métro Decals Will Open the Door to Civility 46

Transport Officials Appeal Judge's Decision in 'Pregnant-Scan' Case 48

Report From The Edward G. Harris Memorial Institute 50

FORUM

On-line Civility Forum 52

PHOTOS

55

CIVILITY IN HISTORY

Civility in Advertising ? 56

Conflicting Views of Civility? 57

Can We Learn About Civility from the Past? 63

DID YOU KNOW?

Did You Know?... 64

Quotations About Civility 66

FACTS AND STATISTICS

P. M. Forni's Twenty-five Rules for Personal Civility 68

Statistics on Incivility 69



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Civility definition

Civility: si-vil-i-tee noun, plural, ci-vil-i-ties

1. Courteous behavior or expression; politeness.
2. An individual act or a manner of behaving which conforms to social conventions of propriety.

Related Terms

1. The term civility may also refer to behavior among persons and groups that conforms to the social norms, rules, regulations, and laws that are considered part of a civil society.
2. Civic virtue is also a related term that refers to ways of behaving and speaking that contribute to the success of a community.

Guidelines for Submitting Articles to Civillipedia

Civillipedia is a digital collection of resources on the topic of civility to which anyone may contribute articles and/or podcasts. All submissions must contain the codes and conventions of those genres as modeled in those published in Civillipedia. Lively, diverse perspectives are welcome and valued. All texts, however, that are not relevant to the topic and/or do not comply with Civillipedia's civility code will be removed. Contributions must be polite in tone, avoid language that is racist, sexist, abusive or obscene, respect others' privacy, particularly that of children, and comply with the criminal code and copyright laws. Contributors to Civillipedia must not make personal smears or threats.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



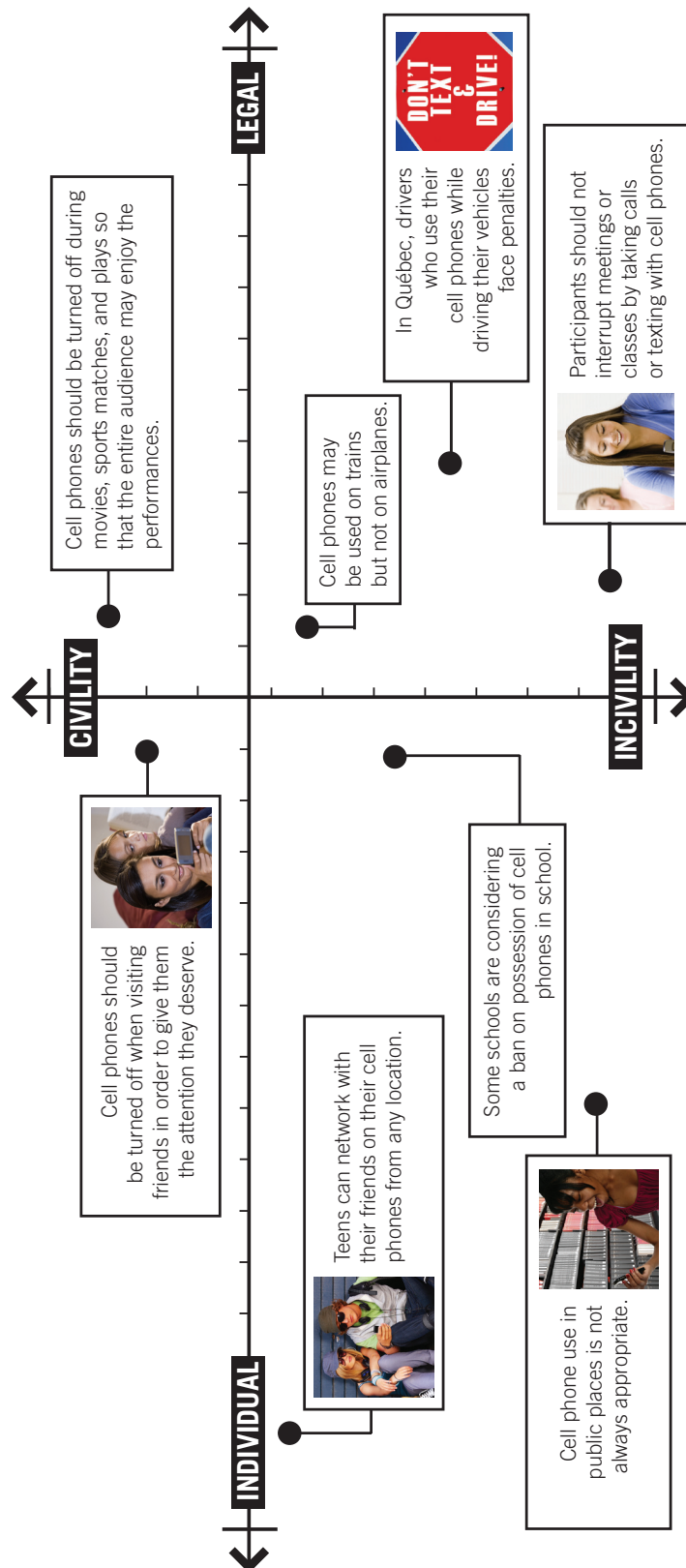
Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics





Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Are We Really Less Civil Than Ever? - By Carena Christie



I was at my favourite breakfast cafe the other day and the waitress asked if I would like a coffee. I replied: "Yes." She replied: "Brilliant!"

Whaaa....? Brilliant? There is *nothing* brilliant about accepting a coffee on a Sunday morning. It's normal. Pretty much everyone I know wants coffee in the morning. Brilliant would be if I managed to negotiate world peace, or produced a cure for cancer, or found a new, cheap, sustainable-energy resource. Or if the Habs won the Stanley Cup. But ordering coffee?

It's an infectious trend in customer service: uber-friendly staff virtually attacking you with pleasantries and friendliness, call-centre staff telling you that your phone number and mother's maiden name are "perfect!", cashiers wishing you a good day and "we're missing you already". We're bombarded by good manners and kindness - and reminders about good manners and kindness - everywhere we turn. The people who complain that our world is more uncivil and heartless and rude than ever before are focusing on the wrong things. The truth is that we live in a society where civility is abundant.

People in general are not intentionally rude. They are often thoughtless or absentminded and only need a quiet, gentle reminder. Think of the campaign from Quebec's own SAAQ encouraging courtesy on the road. Notice the markers on the platforms at some Montreal Metro stations to allow people off the trains before new passengers charge on, and the signs on buses to remind people to offer their seats to those less mobile. Consider the announcements in cinemas requesting audience members to switch off cell-phones. Generally, we humans will do something that we believe is good, especially when gently prompted. Don't you think? Fantastic.

On the more active side of things, there's the *Random Acts of Kindness* crusade encouraging people to go out of their way to lend a hand to others. Holding doors open. Letting pedestrians cross. Allowing people ahead of you at the grocery store if they have only one or two items. "When kindness is expressed, healthy relationships are created, community connections are nourished, and people are inspired to pass kindness on," states the official *Random Acts of Kindness Foundation* website. Lovely.

Similar, is the *Pay It Forward* crusade where, instead of paying "back" a kindness to the same person, you pass on the kindness to someone new, and then they do likewise. Before you know it, everyone is doing kind things for strangers and the world is a better place. Excellent.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

However, it's grown into a beast of unholy proportions. It's an absolute overload of civility. Don't get me wrong: I'm not suggesting we change that in any way – hey, I am all for politeness, compassion and empathy. I just think it's time we stopped kidding ourselves that our society is a raw, rough, uncivil state of affairs.

The twin ideas of *Random Acts of Kindness* and *Paying It Forward* have spawned organisations like *The Extreme Kindness Crew*. Four Canadian “goodlums” got together and decided they wanted to inspire optimism and hope to combat the fear that followed the attacks on New York City's Twin Towers in 2001. They went coast-to-coast in a motor home on their *Extreme Kindness Tour*: three months of terrorising the country doing good deeds for as many people in as many communities as possible. The four men, all aged in their 20s, visited hospitals, served food in soup kitchens, delivered flowers, raised money and more in an effort to “make someone's day”. Their mission is still to “connect the world through kindness” and these days they're into motivational speaking and corporate workshops. And they still encourage everyone to go out of their way to commit at least one act of kindness – big or small, random or planned – per day. There's also *The Kindness Offensive*, a similar organisation based in the United Kingdom that works with individuals and charities.

You may be interested to hear about “Motiv8”, a community policing effort which aims to promote civility in southern England. Are you under 18? Caught doing something good?? You'll get a ticket – meaning you'll have the chance to receive an official certificate and win prizes like movie tickets and gift cards for local stores. And what do you have to do? Pick up litter. Hand in lost property. Raise money for charity. That sort of civil thing. Stellar.

We are moving towards a more equal, aware and compassionate global society. There are more examples of civility around than you can poke a stick at. If you're in doubt, check out *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. This ever-expanding series of books is choc-full with heart-warming anecdotes which, in general, recount poignant moments of human civility and kindness. The fact is, we are more civil than ever. Don't you think? Perfect. And now, I'm off to my favourite breakfast cafe. I fancy a coffee, and the waitress there thinks I'm brilliant.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



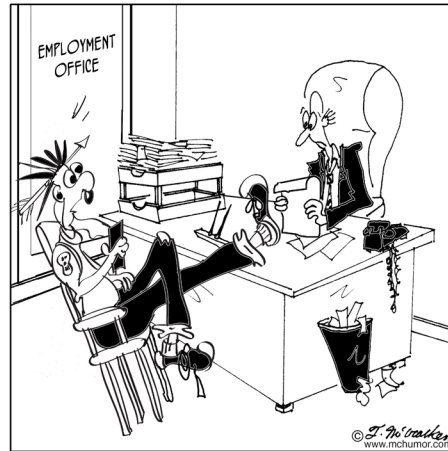
Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Workplace Civility: Getting Ahead With Courtesy and Kindness

- by Caitlin Campbell



"I just don't get it. I've applied for over 200 jobs, but I've never even got a call back."

"WOULD YA GET WITH THE PROGRAM!?"

The demand was loud and followed by a beat of silence on the chilly December morning. Both the stunned customer and the frazzled ticket agent at the ski resort were speechless. The manager stepped in swiftly to smooth things over.

That morning, everything had been going wrong: poor skiing conditions, glitches in the new computer system, pens that didn't work, testy customers. A LOT of testy customers. With her patience at an all time low, an employee had lost her self-control and yelled at one. She was fired.

Later, even she admitted that the company was justified in "letting her go". She'd already had several warnings, and this was the final straw. The lesson was that, even in times of stress, even when a comment seems warranted, and no matter how tempted you are to let fly, there are still standards of courtesy and civility that are expected from employees in a workplace.

More and more, incivility in the workplace is being recognised and addressed for what it is. Some big changes have already been made: laws that prohibit sexual harassment, racial discrimination, and even smoking, have gone a long way towards improving the overall level of civility in the workplace. But it is not something that can be "fixed" and forgotten. It requires constant effort from everyone to maintain a healthy work environment.

Dr. Benet Davetian is the Director of the Civility Institute at the University of Prince Edward Island, and the author of *Civility: A Cultural History*. In broad terms, Dr. Davetian makes the distinction between two types of civility: basic etiquette, and a deeper desire for a kinder, more ethical world. They are both important, he says, especially in the workplace.

Lew Bayer agrees. Ms. Bayer is the President of the Manitoba-based company *The Civility Experts*, which specialises in giving workshops and presentations about improving the level of courtesy and ethics in the workplace. Likewise, she notes the difference between etiquette and kindness. "We can teach almost anyone manners – that is, how to exhibit civil behaviour, and follow social rules. But the real goal is to get them to buy in... to genuinely want to be kinder, to consistently show respect, restraint and responsibility – that's Dr. Forni's approach," Ms. Bayer said.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

In both her time with *The Civility Experts* and in her former career as Director of Food and Beverage for a hotel chain, Ms. Bayer has seen her fair share of uncivil behaviour. “Have you ever seen someone pull a hair from his scalp and floss his teeth with it?” she asks. “I have.” Twelve years ago she set out to simply teach table manners, but this soon grew into something much bigger. “Initially I just saw a need... but after my business partner at the time and I published our first three books, the business took on a mind of its own and we quickly grew into lecturing and teaching and creating materials on all aspects of etiquette.”

It’s an industry that is growing quickly. There are many companies dedicated to raising the level of civility in the workplace – from individual appearance and personal conduct, to how corporations treat their employees. It’s a simple idea: a courteous and caring work environment means a healthier, happier staff and increased productivity. Everybody wins.

“Among other things, a lack of civility can impact communication, productivity, health, retention, service, and certainly the bottom line,” Lew said.

So if you are new to the workplace, or about to enter it, there are a few simple ways to better prepare yourself in order to land and keep a job that you want. Demonstrating good judgement during the job application process is a good place to start. “A young person applying for a corporate job who puts hot2trot@hotmail.com as her contact address is just not thinking,” Ms. Bayer said. Similarly, leaving a cell number for interviewers to call and answering with “Wassup?” is likely to be off-putting. Other evidence that shows common sense is lacking? “Taking calls during the interview, not bothering to put real shoes on, saying you have to leave early because you have a tattoo appointment, bringing your dog, friend or parent to the interview, and not knowing to shake the interviewer’s hand.”

Dr. Davetian notes that, sometimes, in an effort to show confidence and personality, job applicants can come across as narcissistic and arrogant in their cover-letters. This means they don’t even get a toe in the door. “A corporation wants to know you are humble enough to listen to instructions,” he says. “They’re interested in seeing politeness and an attitude of deferral.”

Something else to consider in the application process is researching the company itself. How does it treat its employees? While it’s not realistic to make huge demands as an entry-level employee, it is good to know that an employer is fair, not exploitative. A simple example is an employer who offers office staff shoulder massages to help relieve tension.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics



Once you have the job, it doesn't take much effort to make small gestures that add up. Dressing professionally, saying "Good morning", turning off your cell-phone while in meetings, acknowledging others, being punctual, ignoring gossip, and responding promptly to messages all contribute to a more courteous, civil work environment. Ms. Bayer also emphasises the importance of cross-generational understanding. "There are four generational groups in a lot of workplaces. Generation Y [people], for example, don't value long-term employment with one

organization the same way Traditionals did; this in itself changes how they view loyalty and accountability and the value of workplace relationships," she says.

Dr. Davetian recommends learning about human interactions and "what makes people tick", noting that learning about embarrassment and shame is a way to increase awareness of how you treat others, and to improve on it. This, in turn, goes a long way towards improving workplace relations. He also emphasises the importance of developing a reputation for honesty, and of understanding how customs that show politesse change across cultures and borders.

What of the incivilities to avoid? "In my opinion the worst incivilities are the deliberate ones: the sneaky, little passive aggressive actions – ignoring or sabotaging, or accidentally on purpose leaving out important pieces of information and so on – that are intended to cause hurt. The ones that deplete a person's confidence or trust or character – those are the worst," Ms. Bayer said.

Yet even if you can avoid that kind of deliberate incivility, it's still sometimes tricky to be constantly courteous, kind and civil despite pressure and stress, or if you feel your hard work is not recognised. However, as the ski-resort ticket agent discovered, keeping a job can be difficult without the trio of respect, restraint and responsibility. It's something to keep in mind.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Civility in Sports? - by Will Russell-Andrews



"They may own the podium, but it appears to be in a low rent district."

Every human being possesses a competitive instinct. In sport, this instinct can come out safely: you join a team, give it all you've got, and you either win... or you're beaten by a worthy opponent. In the end, you can all shake hands or bump fists, and go on your way with your head held high. Sport provides a glorious arena for a noble contest where the win is only as meaningful as the way the game is played. At least, that's the theory.

The reality is further from the truth, and if you've ever played in organised sport, you probably understand. For all the high ideals involved,

there's also sneaky, mean-spirited, crass, aggressive, and sometimes, simply thoughtless behaviour going on – both during and after the game, both on and off the field (or ice, or court, or course, or diamond). There's a line – it's clear but it's also easy to cross. It's when healthy rivalry between adversaries becomes raw violence, or when offences are suspiciously overlooked by referees, or when shouts of encouragement from parents and coaches become rants of abuse, or when the otherwise healthy diet and fitness regimen of an athlete starts to include steroids. There are many obvious examples of poor form, unfairness and incivility in sport, just as there are many obvious examples of fair play and outstanding sportsmanship. What are harder to identify are incivilities that are subtle, quiet, and sometimes, even accepted as customs and traditions. It's here that the line becomes blurry.

Early in 2010 there was controversy over Canada's Winter Olympic campaign to *Own The Podium*. To some it came across as a mandate to win at all costs, at the expense of sportsmanship. There were reports that Olympic officials restricted access to on-ice practice time for teams other than Canada, leading to accusations of unfair advantage and unsportsmanlike behaviour. Sports commentator Ted Bird described the *Own The Podium* campaign as "everything Canadians by reputation are not – presumptuous, boastful and brash to the point of arrogance". The campaign placed an undue, heavy burden on Canadian athletes – that anything less than a gold medal was unacceptable. It also probably sent a condescending message to Canada's former Olympians who had "failed" to win gold – their efforts just didn't count. Defenders of the program insisted it was about time that this type of money was invested in sports and that Canada had the right as host country to stack the odds in its own favour; critics argued the money could have been better spent on education or health care and that hosts should be more humble. What is clear is this: the higher the stakes in sports the more winning matters.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Then, there is the quiet controversy of using Amerindian imagery in sporting logos. According to Noah Augustine, a Mi'kmaq writer from the *Canadian Maritimes*, the use of this imagery is offensive to many aboriginal people. "...For me, as an aboriginal person, the use of these religious symbols and caricatures of Indian chiefs or spiritual leaders as sports logos is as offensive to my cultural heritage as it would be for an African Canadian to observe the "Boston Blacks" – or for religious people to see the image of a rabbi, an archbishop or the Dalai Lama stitched into the shoulder patches of professional sports teams," he writes. Again, there is disagreement – with some people saying that using Amerindian imagery and names is a nod to courage and the warrior spirit, and others arguing that it should be regarded as unacceptable in the same way that randomly adopting the imagery and name of another visible minority – such as Asians, Latinos or Arabs – as a logo or mascot would be seen as unsavoury.

There is also inequality between women's and men's professional sports. Without even getting into the issues of opportunity and access, there is a large difference in the salaries of professional sportswomen compared to their male counterparts, and it is only recently that the men's and women's prize money has been equal in some events such as the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament. Again, there are many people who defend the disparity in salaries based on supply and demand, rationalizing that far more people (including women) want to see men play sport than want to see women play sport. But it's hard to really know this, unless the vast majority of commercial, mainstream sports were played by women (in the same way that they are currently played by men) and the game attendance and TV viewership statistics compared. If you loved sport, wouldn't you watch the games anyway?

Closer to home is the elitism in sports leagues that cost more money than the average family can afford. Elitism and exclusivity are rarely seen as fair. Perhaps the most familiar controversy is the ongoing debate over whether school coaches should play their teams solely to win or should give everyone a turn. After all, what lesson is being taught? Does winning mean so much that some team members don't get a chance to play at all? Or is it a fair system based on merit where the logical goal of any team is to win? Is it fair and civil to reward and applaud mediocre ability? Is it fair and civil to allow everyone an opportunity? Canadian writer Malcolm Gladwell argues in his book *The Outliers* that innate raw talent has less to do with excellence than simple opportunity and copious practice. It depends on your philosophy, although many players of all abilities tend to accept that in a high stakes game it is fair and civil for fellow team members to allow the best players the most game time.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics



It's not always easy to see a clear line in sports between fair and unfair, between dignity and humiliation, between civility and incivility. It's complicated. Yet, there is hope that, from time to time, everyone can step back and take a good, long, hard look at what is actually going on and imagine someone else's perspective. There is hope that champions realise that their victory only means as much as the way the game is played, the skill of worthy opponents, and the fairness of the governing rules. It is true that

different philosophies yield different versions of what is fair, acceptable and civil. Still, the line becomes clearer if you ask yourself: *If my opponents or counterparts were doing this, or if I were subjected to their conditions... would I still think it legitimate and fair?* The answer should help to bring the blurry line into sharp focus.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Never Say Never

Transcript of documentary podcast

MUSIC

SANDRA:

Ugh, I was out on the street (sighs). I didn't sleep (laughs). I was afraid to, so I was quite tired. Like, what do you do, all day long with nothing to do? It was very long and lonely.

MUSIC

LINDSAY:

Sandra Zubis is sixty one years old. She has four children and three grandchildren. She looks like your average grandmother.

SANDRA:

Lonely 'cause I didn't bother with anybody, I just walked the streets.

LINDSAY:

She had been living with her daughter, but she'd become a prostitute. She moved in with her son. He was evicted from his apartment because of a drug problem. Sandra found herself homeless for the first time in her 50s.

MUSIC

SANDRA:

I was in shock to realise that I was out on the street. The hours would go by and I'd wait for daytime to see people around and feel normal. I was just existing. I was existing.

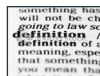
MUSIC

CHAD:

So I was walking down the main street in Lachute and I saw a guy sitting down on a bench, he was like dressed all dirty and everything, he had long hair, long beard, he looked like, very rubbish. And he was holding out his coffee cup and, like when I passed him he asked me for change and I just turned around to him and told him uh, why don't you do like the rest of us and get a job, you stupid bum.

LINDSAY:

This is Chad McKinnon-Hébert. He's a clean-shaven guy wearing nice jeans and a T-Shirt. He's 26 years old.



Civility definition

CHAD:

They are completely disrespectful. I find people come up to me asking me for change and everything and sometimes I don't have any on me. I tell them, "No, sorry, I don't have any" and they're practically reaching to grab into my pockets to see if I'm telling them the truth.



Civility Matrix



Articles

SANDRA:

I find that when you're on the street, just, the street people have so much compassion for you. They're so willing to help you out and they protect each other. Like they'll watch each other's back. It's amazing what they do when they're on the street, because they're all in the same situation.



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems

CHAD:

Here's the elevator. O.K., so right now we're gonna go up to the dorm where I sleep.



In the news



Forum

CHAD:

Now we're going to the third floor.

SANDRA:

People say, "Oh, I would never be out on the street". You never say never. There are reasons people are at shelters, like everybody has their story. Never say never.



Photos



Civility in history

CHAD:

Now we're on the third floor.



Did you know?

LINDSAY:

Chad brings me into a bright dorm room with ten beds, separated by blue and yellow painted plywood.



Facts and statistics

CHAD:

This is where I sleep. My bed. Um, I have my little stuffed animals. I don't care, I'm a guy, but I like stuffed animals. I have my closet. I have a lock on it 'cause I don't want people stealing my stuff, 'cause what I have in there is the only things that I have.

CHAD:

I never pictured myself ended up coming in a shelter. I've always wanted to move to Montreal. It wasn't exactly this kind of way that I pictured it.

MUSIC



Civility definition

LINDSAY:

Chad says people were spreading rumours about him in Lachute. That got him kicked out of the house he was staying in. And because of those rumours, he felt like the whole town had turned against him.



Civility Matrix



Articles

CHAD:

And I had nowhere to go. I just walked around in the bush and everything and I made like, just a little bed with ferns and everything and just slept on that. Nobody really said anything but it was just more or less the looks. 'Cause I was walking around with a bag, uh, wasn't cleanly shaven and everything, clothes were dirty because of sleeping on the ground and all that, so, automatically they judge you, "Oh, he's a bum, he sleeps outside" and this and that, but, inside – it hurts.



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems

SANDRA:

My friend worked at the depanneur where, the area I was in. I used to often walk in and just chit chat with him, 'cause that was my depanneur. And he found out through my son that I was out on the street and he told me, he says, "There's no way my friend is gonna sleep on the street, you come sleep at my place." To find out that somebody that I barely knew, 'cause like I say he was just the depanneur guy I used to talk to, to open up his home and his heart to me was really, *really* cool. Not a lot of people would have done that.



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history

CHAD:

My opinion changed quite a bit in the shelters. Uh, I wasn't treated like a crumpled up piece of paper, I wasn't thrown around or this or that. I was overwhelmed. That night, when I was told that I have a bed, I have meals and everything, like, that night quite honestly I did cry, 'cause I was happy. 'Cause finally I knew that there's hope out there and there are good people.



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

LINDSAY:

Both Chad and Sandra tell me that they are saving money to find their own apartment in a few months.

SANDRA:

I've had a little bit of a rough road the past four years so, being here and surrounded by friendly people and being on my own quest, I feel like I'm on finally my road to recovery here! (laughs) When you walk in here, don't you feel like sunlight?

MUSIC

SOUND OF ELEVATOR DOOR OPENING



Civility definition

SANDRA:

Yeah, this is our cafeteria where I spend many hours. And here's our cook that likes to fatten me up!



Civility Matrix

SOUND OF SANDRA TAPPING THE COOK'S SHOULDER



Articles

COOK:

Hello! (laughs)



Podcasts

SANDRA:

I often volunteer in the kitchen to do dishes to help the cooks and I enjoy doing that.



Short stories

LINDSAY:

Chad volunteers in the kitchen, as well. And he has other plans to help in the future.



Poems

CHAD:

Even when I'm not here anymore, if I'm not working at night, during the hours that they need volunteers and everything, I'll come here and I'll give a couple of hours of my time to them to help them out. They're here to help me, so I'll be there to help them.



In the news

MUSIC



Forum

END



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

A New Direction

Transcript of documentary podcast

Characters

Mr. Trudeau: high school teacher

Chris: high school student

Samira: high school student

SCENE: 1

MUSIC

INTERIOR: STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICE

DISTANT SOUNDS OF STUDENTS IN A HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

MR. TRUDEAU:

Well, *we're* here.

CHRIS:

I *was* actually early.

MR. TRUDEAU:

I hope Samira's on her way. We have a lot to do, but we can't start without the Student Council President.

CHRIS:

It looks like there's only one thing on the agenda ... "civility".

MR. TRUDEAU:

But it is quite a big subject.

CHRIS:

Really? (Beat) I guess you were the one who put it on the-

SOUND: SOMEONE BUSTLES INTO THE ROOM AND CLOSSES THE DOOR

SAMIRA:

Sorry, Mr Trudeau!

SOUND: SCHOOL HALLWAY SOUNDS FADE AWAY

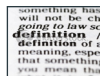
Ah ... it's like my phone knows when I have somewhere to be and it just rings to make me late.

SOUND: SAMIRA PULLS OUT HER CHAIR

I'm ready to discuss ...

SOUND: PAPER RUSTLING

... civ-il-ity?



Civility definition



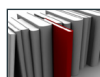
Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

MR. TRUDEAU:

Great!

SAMIRA:

This has Principal Lee written *all* over it.
Did he tell you to put it on the agenda?

MR. TRUDEAU:

I was just about to say to Chris that Principal Lee's concerned about the issue and he wants to see what we can come up with instead of simply -

SOUND: PHONE RINGS

SAMIRA:

[Turns off phone.] There. It's off. I'm *really* sorry.

MR. TRUDEAU:

So ...

CHRIS:

So, do we have a goal or anything? Or is it just us three that talk about it, 'cause I don't think that'd do much.

SAMIRA:

Exactly.

MR. TRUDEAU:

So, you guys do feel that there is something that needs to be worked on at the school in terms of this civility issue?

SAMIRA:

Oh, for sure!

CHRIS:

Wait. That's like politeness and respect and stuff?

MR. TRUDEAU:

Yeah, exactly.

CHRIS:

Well, maybe we should ban cell phones.

SAMIRA:

Bite me, Chris.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Can we try to put some civility into practice?

SAMIRA:

He started it; I was just defending myself. (Beat) Sorry.

MR. TRUDEAU:

So, cell phones might be an issue, but what other things can you think of when you think of a ... lack of civility?

CHRIS:

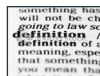
Wait, oh, like walking down the hall four across and no one can get by.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Yeah.

SAMIRA:

Leaving all your garbage on the table after you eat.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

MR. TRUDEAU:

Uh-huh. (Beat) I'm not certain, but I think the reason why the principal put this on our plate is because of a Rate My Teacher incident that got a little ugly.

SAMIRA:

Really? Rate My Teacher, Facebook, email ... for some people it just brings out the worst in them.

CHRIS:

People say things online they would *never* say to someone's face.

SAMIRA:

That's totally true! But that stuff doesn't even really happen at school; it happens at home. I don't think we can even have rules for what people do outside of school.

CHRIS:

It doesn't have to be a rule.

MR. TRUDEAU:

I think Chris is right. There are a lot of ways to deal with this. Maybe it's just a matter of, uh, educating people.

CHRIS:

At a school? Sir!

MR. TRUDEAU:

I know it's a crazy idea.

SAMIRA:

Okay, so you mean like what we do with bottled water. There's no rule against it, but they're always telling us it's better for the environment to fill up our own container.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Exactly.

CHRIS:

That's better actually, because sometimes rules just make you angry. I feel like I'm five again when people are always telling me rules.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Which is how a lot of people feel, so in some situations an awareness campaign can be more effective. Invite people to think about an issue and then --

CHRIS:

Let them decide for themselves.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Uh-huh.

SAMIRA:

Okay, I'm starting to get some ideas. What if a student gave a reminder sort of thing on morning announcements? Or what if, what if we had a poster competition, and then we can also put the posters on the walls?



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

MR. TRUDEAU:

What's a poster going to say?

SAMIRA:

I'm not sure yet. Maybe show two ways to react to a situation -- a rude way and a more civil way.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Sounds good.

CHRIS:

Okay ... I can probably think of a few things.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Great. Can I leave this with you guys for now?

SAMIRA:

Sure.

MR. TRUDEAU:

Class is in two minutes and I don't want to keep thirty-eight people waiting.

CHRIS:

That would be uncivil.

MR. TRUDEAU:

It would. But, your brains are firing.

SOUND: MR. TRUDEAU TAKES OUT A PIECE OF PAPER.

Why don't you write down your ideas and we'll meet back here at the Student Council Office on... Wednesday.

CHRIS:

Maybe you could talk to our teachers and they could give us class time to work on this.

SOUND: SAMIRA IS DIALING HER PHONE

MR. TRUDEAU:

Maybe *you* could speak with your teachers.

CHRIS:

Oh, yeah.

SAMIRA:

(into her phone)

Hey, it's me. Yeah, tell him I'm coming. Yeah, now!

MR. TRUDEAU:

Okay, guys.

CHRIS:

Have a good class, sir.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND NOISES OF STUDENTS IN THE HALL GROW LOUDER

MR. TRUDEAU:

You, too.

NOISES FADE

MUSIC

THE END



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Confucian Riddles

Transcript of documentary podcast

By Kaie Kellough

MUSIC

Spoken word rests between speech and song. The voice is stylized into a performance where speech is, kind of, uh, it's kind of heightened. It's a heightened, charged speech that reaches up close to song, but never actually takes flight into song. It still retains the qualities of speech.

MUSIC

There are many different branches of the spoken word tradition, but three in particular have really influenced my own practice of spoken word.

The first would be dub poetry and dub poetry comes from Jamaica.

MUSIC

It relies on a strident rhythm, and on material that's directly engaged with our society and our experience.

MUSIC

Jazz poetry is another.

MUSIC

Jazz poetry mimics the rhythms of jazz music, most notably the bee-bop of the 1940s and 1950s.

MUSIC

And it has a nimble, improvised quality where poets may spontaneously put words into striking combinations, just in the moment.

MUSIC

Sound poetry is another form that really interests me and sound poetry focuses on the sounds and tones that the voice can create.

Could you be firm, but not harsh, proud but not brash...

And not necessarily on words or on how words are arranged to create meaning.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Do you respect the right to fair vote, eschew the coup?

Now as you're listening to this recording, you can't see me and you can't see that I'm in motion. And spoken word performance depends as much on gesture, expression and movement, as it does on sound, rhythm and vocal intonation.

When researching civility, I consulted the ancient philosopher, Confucius. His writing delves into how people interact with one another, into how social harmony is to be achieved and maintained. And, a lot of his work is written in the form of dialogues, so it's oral, and as a spoken word poet, this really interested me.

I don't know how Confucius sounded when he spoke, but in his texts, what I found was a really easy rhythm, a kind of casual speech. While it was casual, it was also clear and upright. And I tried to integrate elements of what I found in those ancient texts on civility into the voice of a modern spoken word poet.

Confucian Riddles, On the Subject of Civility

i.

If you were a society
how tolerant, how kind,
how fair-minded would you be?

Could you be firm
but not harsh, proud
but not brash, driven
to progress – but not reckless or rash?

ii.

If in class you're first – or fast –
to shoot your hand up high

do you wait – patient – or blurt
your answer out of turn?

If you're nimble-minded, are you
swift or are you slow

to help one in the back row
shrugging: "Hmmm...I don't know."?



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

iii.

Can you accept each
person, regardless of their station,
be they uplifted or downtrodden?

Can you welcome a newcomer
from a far hemisphere, even if you're
a descendant of Champlain,
having lived generations here?

iv.

Can you regard the church,
the mosque, the synagogue
with undivided empathy,
with equanimity? Do you respect the right
to fair vote, eschew the coup?

v.

If you're feeling wild and whim-driven,
do you mind manners, carefully
consider who or what a rash act may hinder?

Can you balance restraint and freedom,
can you be polite without fawning
or flattering, proud without boasting,
can you craft a balance in your being?

vi.

If, in the halls of your school,
where voices bounce off lockers
and bells ring for order

or if, in your neighbourhood streets
where friends and strangers mingle
and new friendships are found

you met the sage Confucius,
would your conduct make him furrow
his brow, would he frown?



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

vii.

When surfing the electric crest
of our digital world,

when flitting fleet as thought
amid the pathways of our minds,

in the sentences we speak
in the tones of our talk

in the arch of an eyebrow
into a question mark –

If you were a society,
how civil would you be?

MUSIC

END



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Little Red Riding Hood - by Jame Finn Garner



There once was a young person named Red Riding Hood who lived with her mother on the edge of a large wood. One day her mother asked her to take a basket of fresh fruit and mineral water to her grandmother's house -- not because this was womyn's work, mind you, but because the deed was generous and helped engender a feeling of community. Furthermore, her grandmother was *not* sick, but rather was in full physical and mental health and was fully capable of taking care of herself as a mature adult.

So Red Riding Hood set off with her basket through the woods. Many people believed that the forest was a foreboding and dangerous place and never set foot in

it. Red Riding Hood, however, was confident enough in her own budding sexuality that such obvious Freudian imagery did not intimidate her.

On the way to Grandma's house, Red Riding Hood was accosted by a wolf, who asked her what was in her basket. She replied, "Some healthful snacks for my grandmother, who is certainly capable of taking care of herself as a mature adult."

The wolf said, "You know, my dear, it isn't safe for a little girl to walk through these woods alone."

Red Riding Hood said, "I find your sexist remark offensive in the extreme, but I will ignore it because of your traditional status as an outcast from society, the stress of which has caused you to develop your own, entirely valid, worldview. Now, if you'll excuse me, I must be on my way."

Red Riding Hood walked on along the main path. But, because his status outside society had freed him from slavish adherence to linear, Western-style thought, the wolf knew a quicker route to Grandma's house. He burst into the house and ate Grandma, an entirely valid course of action for a carnivore such as himself. Then, unhampered by rigid, traditionalist notions of what was masculine or feminine, he put on Grandma's nightclothes and crawled into bed.

Red Riding Hood entered the cottage and said, "Grandma, I have brought you some fat-free, sodium-free snacks to salute you in your role of a wise and nurturing matriarch."



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

From the bed, the wolf said softly, "Come closer, child, so that I might see you."

Red Riding Hood said, "Oh, I forgot you are as optically challenged as a bat. Grandma, what big eyes you have!"

"They have seen much, and forgiven much, my dear."

"Grandma, what a big nose you have – only relatively, of course, and certainly attractive in its own way."

"It has smelled much, and forgiven much, my dear."

"Grandma, what big teeth you have!"

The wolf said, "I am happy with *who* I am and *what* I am," and leaped out of bed. He grabbed Red Riding Hood in his claws, intent on devouring her. Red Riding Hood screamed, not out of alarm at the wolf's apparent tendency toward cross-dressing, but because of his willful invasion of her personal space.

Her screams were heard by a passing woodchopper-person (or log-fuel technician, as he preferred to be called). When he burst into the cottage, he saw the melee and tried to intervene. But as he raised his axe, Red Riding Hood and the wolf both stopped.

"And just what do you think you're doing?" asked Red Riding Hood.

The woodchopper-person blinked and tried to answer, but no words came to him.

"Bursting in here like a Neanderthal, trusting your weapon to do your thinking for you!" she exclaimed. "Sexist! Speciesist! How dare you assume that womyn and wolves can't solve their own problems without a man's help!"

When she heard Red Riding Hood's impassioned speech, Grandma jumped out of the wolf's mouth, seized the woodchopper-person's axe, and cut his head off. After this ordeal, Red Riding Hood, Grandma, and the wolf felt a certain commonality of purpose. They decided to set up an alternative household based on mutual respect and cooperation, and they lived together in the woods happily ever after.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

The Ceremony of Forgiveness - By Angela Long



Every evening at seven p.m., Grandma Laing drew the curtains closed and the theme song for the *Wheel of Fortune* began. It drove me crazy. It made me feel claustrophobic, especially in June when nearly four hours of light remained. Even though I was a teenager who pretended not to notice such things, I liked to watch the birch leaves glow in the evening light and the hue of the sky change.

The closing of the curtains began the day Grandma was discharged from the hospital, the day she moved in with us. Until then, we'd been a nice little trio -- mother, father, daughter.

The prospect of having the house to myself, thanks to brothers who'd moved out and parents with full-time jobs and a penchant for travel, had been on the cusp of reality until Grandma had her stroke. For my entire life, she'd been safely tucked away on Thorncliffe Avenue taking lessons in ballroom dancing and cutting coupons for *Dominion*. But then she became as permanent a fixture in our living room as the water stain on the ceiling.

On the second evening of Grandma's arrival, I waited for a few minutes before pulling the curtains back open. She stared straight ahead at the screen even as I leaned behind her to yank at the draw cord. "E!" she yelled as the light flooded back into the room. "Pick a vowel, you twit!" she cried, laughing her manic, high-pitched laugh that never failed to make me cringe with embarrassment even when there was no one else in the room but television characters. At the first commercial break, Grandma got up without a word and pulled the curtains closed again.

Although I wanted to see what gown the show's hostess would be wearing every evening, I began my protest. I sat outside looking at the birches until the *Wheel of Fortune* was over and Grandma got up to eat one of the over-ripe bananas she was so fond of that made our house smell like a fruit market.

On a theoretical level, I understood that it was a family's responsibility to care for its elderly. But I hadn't been prepared for the reality of Grandma overshadowing the prime of my teen-age years, formative years when having house parties and sneaking into my father's liquor cabinet were so crucial to my development.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Also, most people described me as a ‘nice’ person, but Grandma’s presence forced me to question this. Too often I found myself glaring at her as she sat in her chair -- an ornate, wooden armchair upholstered in pink paisley that she carted with her from Thorncliffe -- with a tattered afghan draped across her knees despite the heat. Somehow Grandma had learned to manipulate the thermostat dial with hands gnarled from a combination of arthritis and paralysis when no one was looking. It registered at eighty-eight degrees year-round. We tried our best to adjust to the equatorial conditions. To my horror, my father began to walk around in his underwear. “Bit hot in here, don’t you think, Oda?” he’d ask.

But of course Grandma couldn’t hear him, or pretended she couldn’t. I suspected that her hearing aid was a farce. Somehow through the wall that separated our bedrooms, Grandma always knew the exact moment I hung up the phone. Before I could dial the next number, she’d steal the line to talk to her Toronto friends about who had died that day or who was in the process of dying or who was waiting for a hip replacement.

I also suspected that the thermostat wasn’t the only thing Grandma was manipulating. Every morning she woke at six a.m., without an alarm clock, and began to bang about the kitchen with her squirrel-like claws until my mother came down to put on the kettle for her. “Oh, I didn’t mean to disturb you, Doris!” she screeched. “I can manage, I can manage!” she screeched, and laughed that manic laugh that my mother said was nerves and that I knew as a dog whistle for humans. Grandma knew exactly what she was doing. She had my mother wrapped around her crooked little pinkie.

When hatred began tarnishing the ‘nice’ image I’d constructed of myself, I tried to think good thoughts. I thought of the visits to Grandma’s house on Thorncliffe, the walks to *Dominion* when she’d let me pull her shopping trolley, the perfect meringue she could whip. I thought of the table she’d set for special occasions: the hand-embroidered tablecloth, the crystal goblets filled with tomato juice. I thought of the look-out at the end of her street where you could watch the Don Valley Parkway snake through the trees and see the CN Tower poke at the sky.

But none of those good thoughts helped when I heard the theme song for the *Wheel of Fortune*. And when my mother asked if I’d mind walking home from school during lunch hours to check up on Grandma, an evil image flashed through my mind: maybe it was time for Grandma to move on. But I walked the twenty minutes home along Harmony Road every day forfeiting lunch hour in the cafeteria with my friends to microwave Grandma a potato, or boil her an egg while she watched the noon news.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

It was during these lunch hours that I began noticing changes in Grandma. Her perfectly curled silver-blue hair began to turn frizzy and white. She began to exude an odour as over-ripe as her bananas. She laughed less. For the first time, I found myself initiating conversation with her; it became too uncomfortable to eat lunch while she sat staring morosely at the television screen with bits of potato or egg yolk speckling the corners of her mouth. “Do you want to sit outside with me, Grandma?” I heard myself ask. She didn’t answer. I walked back to school feeling slightly unsettled while the inklings of a new feeling welled up in my heart: pity for someone other than myself.

The feeling grew as Grandma’s health began to deteriorate and she couldn’t make it downstairs to watch television anymore. And then came the night I awoke in the early morning hours to relieve myself. Walking barefoot along the carpeted hall, I felt something squishy and slightly warm underfoot. And then the smell hit. I sat on the edge of the bathtub running the faucet, furiously scrubbing feces off the soles of my feet, indignant again. I looked at the mess all over the bathroom floor and down the length of the hallway leading straight into her bedroom. I thought of my grandmother sitting in that room. In that smell. I thought of the woman in a black mink and string of pearls straight-backed on the Bloor streetcar, pulling the cord at all the right stops. I thought of her, crouching along the hallway, trying to make it just a few steps more.

I filled a bucket with hot water and began to scrub the carpet. After a few minutes, the door of the master bedroom creaked open and my mother peered out: “What are you doing?” she asked. I kept scrubbing, head down, determined not to let her see my tears.

My memory becomes hazy after that. Was it the next week or the next month when Grandma suffered another stroke? When she lay bunched up in a hospital bed wearing the silk nightgowns with lace collars that my mother insisted on buying for her? I can’t remember. I can’t remember when she was moved from that bed to the bed in the seniors’ home. Was it days later, weeks, months?

Something shifted inside of me the night I scrubbed the carpet. Grandma was no longer Grandma anymore. She became the symbol of things to come. I was seventeen and suddenly realized that I too would age, sicken and die. I avoided visiting Grandma at all costs. Until my parents went on vacation. Until my mother asked: “Would you mind visiting her once or twice while we’re gone?”



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

The seniors' home was such a sad and lifeless place that I found myself visiting every day trying to put a smile on Grandma's face. But no matter how many boxes of cream mints I offered, no matter how many of my bright-eyed nieces, or even kittens I brought to cheer her, it didn't work. It was too late. I heard myself asking to bring her back home. But it was too late for that too.

I don't remember where I was when she died. Was I bussing through Mexico then, or already in Guatemala teaching English? "Don't bother coming home for the funeral." my mother had said. "It's not worth it." And I didn't bother. I stayed wherever I was, drinking coconut juice or swimming beneath volcanoes. I was twenty-one and still unwilling to have anything to do with aging, sickness, or death.

And now I'm thirty-six and living in Italy. I'm on a retreat at a place called *Santacittarama*, The garden of the Serene Heart, in the hills just outside of Rome. Tonight it's New Year's Eve. Instead of drinking champagne and eating *panettone*, a group of about twenty of us are sitting on meditation cushions listening to a monk in saffron-coloured robes talk about reflecting upon our lives. And deaths. He asks us to write a list of people to whom we wish to ask for forgiveness. Alive or dead. And I think of her.

The list is folded and placed with other lists in a black ceramic bowl. The monk holds the bowl aloft. Sporadic burst of fireworks shoot up from the hilltop villages surrounding us.

I'm sorry, I think as seven monks begin to chant a sutra over two-thousand years old. Something, and I don't think I'm imagining it, begins to vibrate inside of me as they chant with what sounds like voices from the depths of a subterranean cavern. I'm sorry, I think as I close my eyes and the voices grow louder, more insistent.

Outside, the fireworks burst all around us. It's midnight. I open my eyes and look at my neighbour: "Happy New Year," I say and smile. The sky around us fills with arcs of multi-coloured, interwoven strands of light. I watch how quickly the colour fades, how quickly it disappears into the black sky.

I walk back to my room, into the darkness of the countryside. Aging, sickness, death, remember with each step. The fireworks stop. Starlight frames the hilltops.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

The Kid Nobody Could Handle - by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.



It was seven-thirty in the morning. Waddling, clanking, muddy machines were tearing a hill to pieces behind a restaurant, and trucks were hauling the pieces away. Inside the restaurant, dishes rattled on their shelves. Tables quaked, and a very kind fat man with a headful of music looked down at the jiggling yolks of his breakfast eggs. His wife was visiting relatives out of town. He was on his own.

The kind fat man was George M. Helmholtz, a man of forty, head of the music department of Lincoln High School, and director of the band. Life had treated him well. Each year he dreamed the same big dream. He dreamed of leading as fine a band as there was on the face of the earth. And each year the dream came true.

It came true because Helmholtz was sure that a man couldn't have a better dream than his. Faced by his unnerving sureness, Kiwanians, Rotarians, and Lions paid for band uniforms that cost twice as much as their best suits, school administrators let Helmholtz raid the budget for expensive props, and youngsters played their hearts out for him. When youngsters had no talent, Helmholtz made them play on guts alone.

Everything was good about Helmholtz's life save his finances. He was so dazzled by his big dream that he was a child in the marketplace. Ten years before, he had sold the hill behind the restaurant to Bert Quinn, the restaurant owner, for one thousand dollars. It was now apparent, even to Helmholtz, that Helmholtz had been had.

Quinn sat down in the booth with the bandmaster. He was a bachelor, a small, dark, humorless man. He wasn't a well man. He couldn't sleep, he couldn't stop working, he couldn't smile warmly. He had only two moods: one suspicious and self-pitying, the other arrogant and boastful. The first mood applied when he was losing money. The second mood applied when he was making it.

Quinn was in the arrogant and boastful mood when he sat down with Helmholtz. He sucked whistlingly on a toothpick, and talked of vision -- his own.

"I wonder how many eyes saw the hill before I did?" said Quinn. "Thousands and thousands, I'll bet -- and not one saw what I saw. How many eyes?"

"Mine, at least," said Helmholtz. All the hill had meant to him was a panting climb, free blackberries, taxes, and a place for band picnics.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

"You inherit the hill from your old man, and it's nothing but a pain in the neck to you," said Quinn. "So you figure you'll stick me with it."

"I didn't figure to stick you," Helmholtz protested. "The good Lord knows the price was more than fair."

"You say that now," said Quinn gleefully. "Sure, Helmholtz, you say that now. Now you see the shopping district's got to grow. Now you see what I saw."

"Yes," said Helmholtz. "Too late, too late." He looked around for some diversion, and saw a fifteen-year-old boy coming toward him, mopping the aisle between booths.

The boy was small but with tough, stringy muscles standing out on his neck and fore-arms. Childhood lingered in his features, but when he paused to rest, his fingers went hopefully to the silky beginnings of sideburns and a mustache. He mopped like a robot, jerkily, brainlessly, but took pains not to splash suds over the toes of his black boots.

"So what do I do when I get the hill?" said Quinn. "I tear it down, and it's like somebody pulled down a dam. All of a sudden everybody wants to build a store where the hill was."

"Um," said Helmholtz. He smiled genially at the boy. The boy looked through him without a twitch of recognition.

"We all got something," said Quinn. "You got music; I got vision." And he smiled, for it was perfectly clear to both where the money lay. "Think big!" said Quinn. "Dream Big! That's what vision is. Keep your eyes wider open than anybody else's."

"That boy," said Helmholtz, "I've seen him around school, but I never knew his name."

Quinn laughed cheerlessly. "Billy the Kid? The storm trooper? Rudolph Valentino? Flash Gordon?" He called the boy.... "Hey, Jim! Come here a minute."

Helmholtz was appalled to see that the boy's eyes were as expressionless as oysters.

"This is my brother-in-law's kid by another marriage -- before he married my sister," said Quinn. "His name's Jim Donnini, and he's from the south side of Chicago, and he's very tough."

Jim Donnini's hands tightened on the mop handle.

"How do you do?" said Helmholtz.

"Hi," said Jim empty.

"He's living with me now," said Quinn. "He's my baby now."

"You want a lift to school, Jim?"



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

"Yeah, he wants a lift to school," said Quinn. "See what you make of him. He won't talk to me." He turned to Jim. "Go on, kid, wash up and shave."

Robotlike, Jim marched away.

"Where are his parents?"

"His mother's dead. His old man married my sister, walked out on her, and stuck her with him. Then the court didn't like the way she was raising him, and put him in foster homes for a while. Then they decided to get him clear out of Chicago, so they stuck me with him." He shook his head. "Life's a funny thing, Helmholtz."

"Not very funny, sometimes," said Helmholtz. He pushed his eggs away.

"Like some whole new race of people coming up," said Quinn wonderingly. "Nothing like the kids we got around here. Those boots, the black jacket -- and he won't talk. He won't run around with the other kids. Won't study. I don't think he can even read and write very good."

"Does he like music at all? Or drawing? Or animals?" said Helmholtz. "Does he collect anything?"

"You know what he likes?" said Quinn. "He likes to polish those boots -- get off by himself and polish those boots. And when he's really in heaven is when he can get off by himself, spread comic books all around him on the floor, polish his boots, and watch television." He smiled ruefully. "Yeah, he had a collection too. And I took it away from him and threw it in the river."

"Threw it in the river?" said Helmholtz.

"Yeah," said Quinn. "Eight knives -- some with blades as long as your hand."

Helmholtz paled. "Oh." A prickling sensation spread over the back of his neck. "This is a new problem at Lincoln High. I hardly know what to think about it." He swept spilled salt together in a neat little pile, just as he would have liked to sweep together his scattered thoughts. "It's a kind of sickness, isn't it? That's the way to look at it?"

"Sick?" said Quinn. He slapped the table. "You can say that again!" He tapped his chest. "And Doctor Quinn is just the man to give him what's good for what ails him."

"What's that?" said Helmholtz.

"No more talk about the poor little sick boy," said Quinn grimly. "That's all he's heard from the social workers and the juvenile court, and God knows who all. From now on, he's the no-good bum of a man. I'll ride his tail till he straightens up and flies right or winds up in the can for life. One way or the other."

"I see," said Helmholtz.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

“Like listening to music?” said Helmholtz to Jim brightly, as they rode to school in Helmholtz’s car.

Jim said nothing. He was stroking his mustache and sideburns, which he had not shaved off.

“Ever drum with the fingers or keep time with your feet?” said Helmholtz. He had noticed that Jim’s boots were decorated with chains that had no function but to jingle as he walked.

Jim sighed with ennui.

“Or whistle?” said Helmholtz. “If you do any of those things, it’s just like picking up the keys to a whole new world -- a world as beautiful as any world can be.”

Jim gave a soft Bronx cheer.

“There!” said Helmholtz. “You’ve illustrated the basic principle of the family of brass wind instruments. The glorious voice of every one of them starts with a buzz on the lips.”

The seat springs of Helmholtz’s old car creaked under Jim, as Jim shifted his weight. Helmholtz took this as a sign of interest, and he turned to smile in comradely fashion. But Jim had shifted his weight in order to get a cigarette from inside his tight leather jacket.

Helmholtz was too upset to comment at once. It was only at the end of the ride, as he turned into the teachers’ parking lot, that he thought of something to say.

“Sometimes,” said Helmholtz, “I get so lonely and disgusted, I don’t see how I can stand it. I feel like doing all kinds of crazy things, just for the heck of it -- things that might even be bad for me.”

Jim blew a smoke ring expertly.

“And then!” said Helmholtz. He snapped his fingers and honked his horn. “And then, Jim, I remember I’ve got at least one tiny corner of the universe I can make just the way I want it! I can go to it and gloat over it until I’m brand-new and happy again.”

“Aren’t you the lucky one?” said Jim. He yawned.

“I am, for a fact,” said Helmholtz. “My corner of the universe happens to be the air around my band. I can fill it with music. Mr. Beeler, in zoology, has his butterflies. Mr. Trottman, in physics, has his pendulum and tuning forks. Making sure everybody has a corner like that is about the biggest job we teachers have. I -- ”



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

The car door opened and slammed, and Jim was gone. Helmholtz stamped out Jim's cigarette and buried it under the gravel of the parking lot.

Helmholtz's first class of the morning was C Band, where beginners thumped and wheezed and tooted as best they could, and looked down the long, long, long road through B Band to A Band, the Lincoln High School Ten Square Band, the finest band in the world.

Helmholtz stepped onto the podium and raised his baton. "You are better than you think," he said. "A-one, a-two, a-three." Down came the baton.

C Band set out in its quest for beauty -- set out like a rusty switch engine, with valves stuck, pipes clogged, unions leaking, bearings dry.

Helmholtz was still smiling at the end of the hour, because he'd heard in his mind the music as it was going to be someday. His throat was raw, for he had been singing with the band for the whole hour. He stepped into the hall for a drink from the fountain.

As he drank, he heard the jingling of chains. He looked up at Jim Donnini. Rivers of students flowed between classrooms, pausing in friendly eddies, flowing on again. Jim was alone. When he paused, it wasn't to greet anyone, but to polish the toes of his boots on his trousers legs. He had the air of a spy in a melodrama, missing nothing, liking nothing, looking forward to the great day when everything would be turned upside down.

"Hello, Jim," said Helmholtz. "Say I was just thinking about you. We've got a lot of clubs and teams that meet after school. And that's a good way to get to know a lot of people."

Jim measured Helmholtz carefully with his eyes. "Maybe I don't want to know a lot of people," he said. "Ever think of that?" He set his feet down hard to make his chains jingle as he walked away.

When Helmholtz returned to the podium for a rehearsal of B Band, there was a note waiting for him, calling him to a special faculty meeting.

The meeting was about vandalism.

Someone had broken into the school and wrecked the office of Mr. Crane, head of the English Department. The poor man's treasures -- books, diplomas, snapshots of England, the beginnings of eleven novels -- had been ripped and crumpled; mixed, dumped and trampled, and drenched with ink.

Helmholtz was sickened. He couldn't believe it. He couldn't bring himself to think about it. It didn't become real to him until late that night, in a dream. In the dream Helmholtz saw a boy with barracuda teeth, with claws like baling hooks. The monster climbed into a window of the high school and dropped to the floor of the band rehearsal room. The monster clawed to shreds the heads of the biggest drum in the state. Helmholtz woke up howling. There was nothing to do but dress and go to the school.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

At two in the morning, Helmholtz caressed the drum heads in the band rehearsal room, with the night watchman looking on. He rolled the drum back and forth on its cart, and he turned the light inside on and off, on and off. The drum was unharmed. The night watchman left to make his rounds.

The band's treasure house was safe. With the contentment of a miser counting his money, Helmholtz fondled the rest of the instruments, one by one. And then he began to polish the sousaphones. As he polished, he could hear the great horns roaring, could see them flashing in the sunlight, with the Stars and Stripes and the banner of Lincoln High going before.

"Yump-yump, tiddle-tiddle, yump-yump, tiddle-tiddle!" sang Helmholtz happily. "Yump-yump-yump, ra-a-a-a, yump-yump, yump-yump -- boom!"

As he paused to choose the next number for his imaginary band to play, he heard a furtive noise in the chemistry laboratory next door. Helmholtz sneaked into the hall, jerked open the laboratory door, and flashed on the lights. Jim Donnini had a bottle of acid in either hand. He was splashing acid over the periodic table of the elements, over the blackboards covered with formulas, over the bust of Lavoisier. The scene was the most repulsive thing Helmholtz could have looked upon.

Jim smiled with thin bravado.

"Get out," said Helmholtz.

"What're you gonna do?" said Jim.

"Clean up. Save what I can," said Helmholtz dazedly. He picked up a wad of cotton waste and began wiping up the acid.

"You gonna call the cops?" said Jim.

"I -- I don't know," said Helmholtz. "No thoughts come. If I'd caught you hurting the bass drum, I think I would have killed you with a single blow. But I wouldn't have had any intelligent thoughts about what you were -- what you thought you were doing."

"It's about time this place got set on its ear," said Jim.

"Is it?" said Helmholtz. "That must be so, if one of our students wants to murder it."

"What good is it?" said Jim.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

"Not much good, I guess," said Helmholtz. "It's just the best thing human beings ever managed to do." He was helpless, talking to himself. He had a bag of tricks for making boys behave like men -- tricks that played on boyish fears and dreams and loves. But here was a boy without fear, without dreams, without love.

"If you smashed up all the schools," said Helmholtz, "we wouldn't have any hope left."

"What hope?" said Jim.

"The hope that everybody will be glad he's alive," said Helmholtz. "Even you."

"That's a laugh," said Jim. "All I ever got out of this dump was a hard time. So what're you gonna do?"

"I have to do something, don't I?" said Helmholtz.

"I don't care what you do," said Jim.

"I know," said Helmholtz. "I know." He marched Jim into his tiny office off the band rehearsal room. He dialed the telephone number of the principal's home. Numbly, he waited for the bell to get the old man from his bed.

Jim dusted his boots with a rag.

Helmholtz suddenly dropped the telephone into its cradle before the principal could answer. "Isn't there anything you care about but ripping, hacking, bending, rending, smashing, bashing?" he cried. "Anything? Anything but those boots?"

"Go on! Call up whoever you're gonna call," said Jim.

Helmholtz opened a locker and took a trumpet from it. He thrust the trumpet into Jim's arms. "There!" he said, puffing with emotion. "There's my treasure. It's the dearest thing I own. I give it to you to smash. I won't move a muscle to stop you. You can have the added pleasure of watching my heart break while you do it."

Jim looked at him oddly. He laid down the trumpet.

"Go on!" said Helmholtz. "If the world has treated you so badly, it deserves to have the trumpet smashed!"

"I--" said Jim. Helmholtz grabbed his belt, put a foot behind him, and dumped him on the floor.

Helmholtz pulled Jim's boots off and threw them into a corner. "There!" said Helmholtz savagely. He jerked the boy to his feet again and thrust the trumpet into his arms once more.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Jim Donnini was barefoot now. He had lost his socks with his boots. The boy looked down. The feet that had once seemed big black clubs were narrow as chicken wings now -- bony and blue, and not quite clean.

The boy shivered, then quaked. Each quake seemed to shake something loose inside, until, at last, there was no boy left. No boy at all. Jim's head lolled, as though he waited only for death.

Helmholtz was overwhelmed by remorse. He threw his arms around the boy. "Jim! Jim -- listen to me, boy!"

Jim stopped quaking.

"You know what you've got there -- the trumpet?" said Helmholtz. "You know what's special about it?"

Jim only sighed.

"It belonged to John Philip Sousa!" said Helmholtz. He rocked and shook Jim gently, trying to bring him back to life. "I'll trade it to you, Jim -- for your boots. It's yours, Jim! John Philip Sousa's trumpet is yours! It's worth hundreds of dollars, Jim -- thousands!"

Jim laid his head on Helmholtz's breast.

"It's better than boots, Jim," said Helmholtz. "You can learn to play it. You're somebody, Jim. You're the boy with John Philip Sousa's trumpet!"

Helmholtz released Jim slowly, sure the boy would topple. Jim didn't fall. He stood alone. The trumpet was still in his arms.

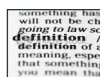
"I'll take you home, Jim," said Helmholtz. "Be a good boy and I won't say a word about tonight. Polish your trumpet, and learn to be a good boy."

"Can I have my boots?" said Jim dully.

"No," said Helmholtz. "I don't think they're good for you."

He drove Jim home. He opened the car windows and the air seemed to refresh the boy. He let him out at Quinn's restaurant. The soft pats of Jim's bare feet on the sidewalk echoed down the empty street. He climbed through a window, and into his bedroom behind the kitchen. And all was still.

The next morning the waddling clanking, muddy machines were making the vision of Bert Quinn come true. They were smoothing off the place where the hill had been behind the restaurant. They were making it as level as a billiard table.



Civility definition



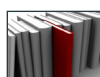
Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Helmholtz sat in a booth again. Quinn joined him again. Jim mopped again. Jim kept his eyes down, refusing to notice Helmholtz. And he didn't seem to care when a surf of suds broke over the toes of his small and narrow brown Oxfords.

"Eating out two mornings in a row?" said Quinn. "Something wrong at home?"

"My wife's still out of town," said Helmholtz.

"While the cat's away--" said Quinn. He winked.

"When the cat's away," said Helmholtz, "this mouse gets lonesome."

Quinn leaned forward. "Is that what got you out of bed in the middle of the night, Helmholtz? Loneliness?" He jerked his head at Jim. "Kid! Go get Mr. Helmholtz his horn."

Jim raise his head, and Helmholtz saw that his eyes were oyster-like again. He marched away to get the trumpet.

Quinn now showed that he was excited and angry. "You take away his boots and give him a horn, and I'm not supposed to get curious?" he said. "I'm not supposed to start asking questions? I'm not supposed to find out you caught him taking the school apart? You'd make a lousy crook, Helmholtz. You'd leave your baton, sheet music, and your driver's license at the scene of the crime."

"I don't think about hiding clues," said Helmholtz. "I just do what I do. I was going to tell you."

Quinn's feet danced and his shoes squeaked like mice. "Yes?" he said. "Well, I've got some news for you too."

"What is that?" said Helmholtz uneasily.

"It's all over with Jim and me," said Quinn. "Last night was the payoff. I'm sending him back where he came from."

"To another string of foster homes?" said Helmholtz weakly.

"Whatever the experts figure out to do with a kid like that." Quinn sat back, exhaled noisily, and went limp with relief.

"You can't," said Helmholtz.

"I can," said Quinn.

"That will be the end of him," said Helmholtz. "He can't stand to be thrown away like that one more time."

"He can't feel anything," said Quinn. "I can't help him; I can't hurt him. Nobody can. There isn't a nerve in him."



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

"A bundle of scar tissue," said Helmholtz.

The bundle of scar tissue returned with the trumpet. Impassively, he laid it on the table in front of Helmholtz.

Helmholtz forced a smile. "It's yours, Jim," he said. "I gave it to you."

"Take it while you got the chance, Helmholtz," said Quinn. "He doesn't want it. All he'll do is swap it for a knife or a pack of cigarettes."

"He doesn't know what it is, yet," said Helmholtz. "It takes a while to find out."

"Is it any good?" said Quinn.

"Any good?" said Helmholtz, not believing his ears. "Any good?" He didn't see how anyone could look at the instrument and not be warmed and dazzled by it. "Any good?" he murmured. "It belonged to John Philip Sousa."

Quinn blinked stupidly. "Who?"

Helmholtz's hand fluttered on the table top like the wings of a dying bird. "Who was John Philip Sousa?" he piped. No more words came. The subject was too big for a tired man to cover. The dying bird expired and lay still.

After a long silence, Helmholtz picked up the trumpet. He kissed the cold mouthpiece and pumped the valves in a dream of brilliant cadenza. Over the bell of the instrument, Helmholtz saw Jim Donnini's face, seemingly floating in space -- all but deaf and blind. Now Helmholtz saw the futility of men and their treasures. He had thought that his greatest treasure, the trumpet, could buy a soul for Jim. The trumpet was worthless.

Deliberately, Helmholtz hammered the trumpet against the table edge. He bent it around a coat tree. He handed the wreck to Quinn.

"Ya busted it," said Quinn, amazed. "Why'dja do that? What's that prove?"

"I -- I don't know," said Helmholtz. A terrible blasphemy rumbled deep in him, like the warning of a volcano. And then, irresistibly, out it came. "Life is no damn good," said Helmholtz. His face twisted as he fought back tears and shame.

Helmholtz, the mountain that walked like a man, was falling apart. Jim Donnini's eyes filled with pity and alarm. They came alive. They became human. Helmholtz had got a message through. Quinn looked at Jim, and something like hope flickered for the first time in his bitterly lonely old face.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Two weeks later, a new semester began at Lincoln High.

In the band rehearsal room, the members of C Band were waiting for their leader -- were waiting for their destinies as musicians to unfold.

Helmholtz stepped onto the podium and rattled his baton against his music stand. "*The Voices of Spring*," he said. "Everybody hear that? *The Voices of Spring*?"

There were rustling sounds as the musicians put the music on their stands. In the pregnant silence that followed their readiness, Helmholtz glanced at Jim Donnini, who sat on the last seat of the worst trumpet section of the worst band in school.

His trumpet, John Philip Sousa's trumpet, George M. Helmholtz's trumpet, had been repaired.

"Think of it this way," said Helmholtz. "Our aim is to make the world more beautiful than it was when we came into it. It can be done. You can do it."

A small cry of despair came from Jim Donnini. It was meant to be private, but it pierced every ear with its poignancy.

"How?" said Jim.

"Love yourself," said Helmholtz, "and make your instrument sing about it. A-one, a-two, a-three." Down came his baton.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Girls Can We Educate We Dads? - by James Berry



Listn the male chauvinist in mi dad—
a girl walkin night street mus be bad.
He dohn sey, the world's a free place
for a girl to keep her unmolested space.
Instead he sey—a girl is a girl.

He sey a girl walkin swingin hips about
call boys to look and shout.
He dohn sey, if a girl have style
she wahn to sey, look
I okay from top to foot.
Instead he sey—a girl is a girl.

Listn the male chauvinist in mi dad—
a girl too laughy-laughy look too glad-glad
jus like a girl too looky-looky roun
will get a pretty satan at her side.
He dohn sey—a girl full of go
dohn wahn stifle talent comin on show.
Instead he sey—a girl is a girl.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics



The Private Life of Parks - by K.V. Skene

Styrofoam cups, cigarette butts, beer cans, bottles,
one soiled sneaker, used condom,
an old man sodden with sleep, the occasional
lover, jogger, rollerblader,
and a kid on a scooter
follows the leader,
 keeps up
as best he can and please
don't
walk
on the grass, pick flowers, spit, litter,
let your pet foul the path. Cycles
are forbidden
(whether ridden or not)



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Telephone Conversation - by Wole Soyinka



The price seemed reasonable, location
Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived
Off premises. Nothing remained
But self-confession. "Madam," I warned,
"I hate a wasted journey—I am African."
Silence. Silenced transmission of
Pressurized good breeding. Voice, when it came,
Lipstick-coated, long-gold rolled
Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was, foully.
"HOW DARK?" . . . I had not misheard . . . "ARE YOU LIGHT
OR VERY DARK?" Button B. Button A. Stench
Of rancid breath of public hide-and-speak.
Red booth. Red pillar-box. Red double-tiered
Omnibus squelching tar. It *was* real! Shamed
By ill-mannered silence, surrender
Pushed dumbfounded to beg simplification.
Considerate she was, varying the emphasis—
"ARE YOU DARK? OR VERY LIGHT?" Revelation came.
"You mean—like plain or milk chocolate?"
Her assent was very clinical, crushing in its light
Impersonality. Rapidly, wave-length adjusted,



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

I chose. "West African sepia"—and as afterthought,
 "Down in my passport." Silence for spectroscopic
 Flight of fancy, till truthfulness clanged her accent
 Hard on the mouthpiece. "WHAT'S THAT?" conceding
 "DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS." "Like brunette."
 "THAT'S DARK, ISN'T IT?" "Not altogether.
 Facially, I am brunette, but madam, you should see
 The rest of me. Palm of my hand, soles of my feet
 Are peroxide blonde. Friction, caused—
 Foolishly madam—by sitting down, has turned
 My bottom raven black—One moment madam!"—sensing
 Her receiver rearing on the thunderclap
 About my ears—"Madam," I pleaded, "wouldn't you rather
 See for yourself?"



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

A Victorian Hangman Tells His Love - by Bruce Dawe



Dear one, forgive my appearing before you like this,
in a two-piece track-suit, welder's goggles
and a green cloth cap like some gross bee—this is the State's
idea...

I would have come
arrayed like a bridegroom for these nuptials
knowing how often you have dreamed about this
moment of consummation in your cell.
If I must bind your arms now to your sides
with a leather strap and ask if you have anything to say
—these too are formalities I would dispense with:
I know your heart is too full at this moment
to say much and that the tranquillizer which I trust
you did not reject out of a stubborn pride
should by this have eased your ache for speech, breath
and the other incidentals which distract us from our end.
Let us now walk a step. This noose
with which we're wed is something of an heirloom, the last three
members of our holy family were wed with it, the softwood beam
it hangs from like a lover's tree notched with their weight.
See now I slip it over your neck, the knot
under the left jaw, with a slip ring
to hold the knot in place . . . There. Perfect.
Allow me to adjust the canvas hood
which will enable you to anticipate the officially prescribed darkness
by some seconds.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

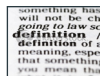
The journalists are ready with the flash-bulbs of their eyes
raised to the simple altar, the doctor twitches like a stethoscope
—you have been given a clean bill of health, like any
modern bride.

With this spring of mine
from the trap, hitting the door lever, you will go forth
into a new life which I, alas, am not yet fit to share.
Be assured, you will sink into the generous pool of public feeling
as gently as a leaf—accept your role, feel chosen.
You are this evening's headlines. Come, my love.

Note:

* *Victorian refers to the Australian state of Victoria, not a historical time period.*

***The death penalty was last used in Australia in 1967 when Ronald Ryan was executed in Victoria, and has since been abolished.*



Civility definition



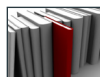
Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Hoping New Métro Decals Will Open the Door to Civility - page 1/2

Hoping New Métro Decals Will Open the Door to Civility

- by Anne Sutherland

If you're in the Lionel Groulx or Berri-UQAM métro station, you might notice some arrows on the surface of the platform that line up with the doors to the cars.

The platform decals were installed last night and are part of a project aimed at adding a little civility to riding the subway.

In an effort to teach commuters some manners, the Société de Transport de Montréal is testing three different platform graphics designed to get people to leave a clear path for passengers getting off the métro.

The arrows are designed to encourage those waiting on the platform to stand back and let people get off the métro first—instead of barging in like stampeding cattle.

As ridership has increased, the STM has received more complaints about people having trouble getting on and off the métro, said Dominique Lemay, senior director of métro operations for the STM.

People want space and don't appreciate being jostled or fighting through a crowd to get off a métro car, he said.

"The doors allow for two people to come out of the métro at the same time, but the crowds often only allow one person out at a time."

If people stand aside to let commuters off the métro cars, it could shave 10-15 seconds from the time spent at each station, Lemay said.

Trains in Taipei and Hong Kong already have platform graphics, and London and Paris are in the process of installing a similar system, Lemay said.

With 98 percent of trains operating on automatic pilot, the doors open at the same place in each station, give or take 20 centimetres, he added.

The engineering and marketing departments of the STM looked at the signage used in other cities and chose three designs for Montreal.

"We will be testing all three to see which one is most effective and which one the people like the best," Lemay said.

The decals were first tried in November, but that attempt was aborted after the stickers peeled off. After some tinkering with the adhesive, new improved decals have been laid at the two busiest stations in the network.



Civility definition

At Lionel Groulx, the decals are on the Green Line platform, direction Honoré-Beaugrand.



Civility Matrix

At Berri-UQAM, decals are on platforms for the Orange Line, direction Cote Vertu, and on the Green Line, direction Angrignon.



Articles

“There’s a lot of line changing at those two stations, so it’s a good place to see the effectiveness of the arrows,” Lemay says.



Podcasts

The STM will be gauging riders’ reaction and behaviour for two weeks to see whether the decals have the desired effect.



Short stories

A survey on the STM website (www.stm.info) beginning today will also help decide which markings are most effective.



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Transport Officials Appeal Judge's Decision in 'Pregnant-Scan' Case

- by Andrew McGillivray

Transport authorities have decided to appeal the decision handed down by the Federal Court of Canada which found that airport officials had been negligent and abusive in their treatment of a 30-year-old Canadian woman who attempted to board a domestic flight at Trudeau Airport last August.

In his decision, Judge Alastair MacKay cited officials for having ignored Montreal resident Nuella Rouanda's basic human rights as well as her rights as a Canadian citizen. Judge MacKay ordered transport officials to pay \$50,000 in damages.

Judge MacKay ruled that every effort should have been made to provide Ms Rouanda with the proper means to communicate and to be informed of her rights. By not doing so prior to subjecting her to a full body scan, officials had violated her constitutional rights.

Airport officials are appealing the landmark decision based on the need to provide proper security for air travellers in the post-9/11 world. "The threat level is always high," says airport representative David McNamara. "Airport security is constantly on the lookout for threats to the safety of passengers. We can't afford not to investigate if we see something suspicious. We are obliged to check out any and all potential threats." "Our security people can't do their jobs properly if they're always worried about stepping on people's toes," McNamara said.

A native of Nigeria, Ms. Rouanda was granted Canadian citizenship in 2006 when she married a Montreal man. The mother of two was pregnant with her third child and was planning to join her husband in Vancouver when the incident occurred at Trudeau Airport.

Airport officials alleged that Ms. Rouanda had exhibited suspicious behaviour and had made frequent visits to the washroom. She was wearing a loose-fitting overcoat which she kept closed in spite of the hot weather. When approached, she became agitated and refused to open her coat, which raised their suspicions still further.

Security officials contend that Ms. Rouanda's behaviour was sufficiently suspicious to warrant their investigation, and that during her frequent trips to the bathroom, she acted as though she was checking her surroundings for possible threats. Her behaviour made officers suspect that she might be concealing an explosive device.

Ms. Rouanda's legal counsel, Robert Jackson, argued that his client did not clearly understand French or English and that airport officials did not provide an interpreter so that she could communicate in her native language.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Ms Rouanda, therefore, misunderstood the intentions of security officers. She became agitated because she was convinced that the authorities meant to take her children from her. When she saw the scanning device, she became terrified for her unborn child.

Scanners are used for security screening and can allow a screening officer to see whether someone is concealing explosives or other dangerous items under clothing. The controversy arises out of the fact that the scanners produce three-dimensional outlines of a person's naked body.

The scanners work by using millimetre-wave technology which allows energy waves to bounce off the body creating an image in the process. The scan differs from traditional x-rays which go straight through a human body and can damage an unborn child.

Airport security officials pointed out that the scanners are not used routinely on passengers. They are used on people who exhibit suspicious behaviour or who are known to pose a security risk. Only people singled out for extra screening are scanned, and they can choose the option of a physical search instead. Once they have successfully passed through the screening, no images are stored or transmitted in any form.

Canadian Civil Liberties Association general counsel Andrew Wilson has expressed misgivings about the behavioural screening plan because he says it could be used to single out certain groups. Selection for scanning on the basis of suspicious behaviour raises the potential for racial profiling.

The current focus seems to be on passengers of Nigerian extraction since a Nigerian man tried unsuccessfully to set off a bomb on an international flight on Christmas Day 2009. As well, travellers from countries like Yemen, Saudi Arabia and eleven other countries face full screens before being allowed to board aircraft.

Wilson also expressed concerns that, while the government insists that the scanners are optional, security officials may change their minds and decide to make the scans mandatory whether the subject chooses a strip-search instead or not.

The use of body scanners also raises concerns about privacy. The privacy commission in Ottawa has sidestepped this issue by stating that the screening officer would be in a separate room and would never actually see the person being screened.

"Nevertheless," Jackson insists, "the person is subjected to a humiliating invasion of his or her personal privacy. These are machines that produce images of you completely naked. It is an offence against human dignity."



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Report from The Edward G. Harris Memorial Institute - page 1/2

Report from The Edward G. Harris Memorial Institute

- by Andrew McGillivray

"If we want a better tomorrow, we must lead today."

- Edward Geraldo Harris, 1983

Report on Civility

Introduction

It is commonly believed that people are much less polite today than they were a few short decades ago. Older people, who claim to remember how things used to be, often complain about rude behaviour on the part of young people. Meanwhile, seniors often take polite behaviour as their due and neglect to acknowledge it when it occurs. Classroom teachers point to the lack of respect that students exhibit toward them and one another, while parents feel frustrated and powerless to discipline their children. And civilities like "please" and "thank you" are heard less often.

The purpose of politeness is to make people feel more comfortable and safe. By observing agreed-upon rules of behaviour, we make it possible for social cohesion to take place. By accompanying good manners with genuine interest, we make people feel valued - and that makes it easier to satisfy our own needs. In short, it's good for business. The purpose of this brief report is to focus on the level of civility present in our society. To do this, we conducted a number of surveys which, though preliminary, were nonetheless revealing and worthy of further study.

Rudeness Report

Among the most striking findings of our surveys are the following:

- Incidents of road rage leading to violence are increasing.
- Cyber bullying, uttering threats through the Internet, has become a popular means of intimidation for today's teens.
- Cell phone users don't respect the rules. They conduct loud intrusive conversations in theatres and restaurants, thereby creating an annoyance for patrons.
- Doctors don't listen to the needs of their patients, thereby raising the likelihood that they will be sued.
- Lawyers insult one another in open court, thereby adding to the tarnish that their collective reputation has already received.

Is Popular Culture to Blame?

A report recently published by Canada's Vanier Institute for the Family states that Canadian and American youngsters today are four times more likely to display rude or violent behaviour than they were 30 years ago. The results of the EGH Memorial Institute preliminary study support this assertion.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

According to those results, it has become increasingly rare to watch a movie that doesn't contain offensive dialogue, most often accompanied by graphic, blood-splattered violence. On television, the use of profanity has become more acceptable, with the result that people in real life tend to parrot the language and to ape the behaviour of their TV role models. Language that was considered offensive when many of us were younger has now become part of everyday parlance.

Violence has also become more commonplace. Each year a typical child watches hundreds of acts of cruelty through the media, and begins to accept what he sees on TV as normal behaviour in real life.

There are a number of probable causes for this social malaise. It could be the fact that children are unsupervised because both parents are working longer hours. It could have to do with rising stress levels, or it could be the easy access to questionable material on the Internet, or even the decline of religion.

But Sometimes You have to be Rude

It has been said that there is more to creating a vibrant democracy than following the social graces of your culture. Some social theorists have argued that the rules of etiquette are, like religion, simply another means to control people.

Civility means good manners, but it carries a deeper meaning, as well. Its root word, "civil", means being in a condition of social order. Civility, therefore, points to the qualities necessary to create a better society. Politeness greases the wheels of that social order, but sometimes, it is more appropriate to be impolite.

Sometimes to ensure the creation of a truly civil society, people have to make occasional intemperate or critical remarks about media figures, politicians and corporate leaders or do impolite things, like staging protests.

Conclusion

While being "impolite" for the greater good may have its purpose, we don't all aspire to be social revolutionaries. For most of us, good manners are valued simply because they contribute to our well-being.

Civility these days is very much about negotiations. Indeed, rather than calling polite behaviour good manners, we should call it reciprocal altruism: a short-term investment which usually promises an immediate return. Put another way, if I'm nice to Joe, Joe will be nice to me.

The good news is that respectful behaviour can be taught. Since politeness signifies respect, perhaps it would be most effective to re-examine the way our grandparents raised their children, and to concentrate on strategies for teaching polite behaviour to young children in our schools and at home.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

On-line Civility Forum

Guidelines for Submissions

Contributions to our forums are valued. Your vigorous perspectives enrich Civilipedia and create lively diverse conversations. We remove all posts that are not relevant to the topic and/or that do not comply with our civility code.

All postings must:

Be polite in tone.

Avoid language that is racist, sexist, abusive or obscene.

Respect others' privacy, particularly that of children.

Assume that people are innocent until proven guilty.

Respect the criminal code.

Respect copyright laws.

All postings must not:

Make personal smears.

Contain threats.

Be written in CAPS, the equivalent of online "shouting".

Contain advertising or promotions for commercial enterprises.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Who's responsible for online civility?

I love writing so I keep a blog. It's shared with friends, family, and others. The trouble is that sometimes people leave comments that are pretty rude. The worst part is that they are either anonymous or they're using a screen name, so I have no idea who they are. It's like they are hiding behind a mask and think they can say whatever they want. What can I do about it? Who's in charge of keeping things polite and fair online??

Amanda

I've noticed the same thing when I read other people's blogs. There are some really nasty responses! If it's your blog, doesn't that give you the capacity to delete comments that you don't like?

Fatimah

Well, I tried that already, but ended up with worse comments about censorship and depriving people of their right to free speech.

Amanda

Free speech, my eye!! Insulting people, making threats, swearing, making false claims and false accusations – that's not free speech. That's just boneheads who like getting a reaction. The best way to deal with them is to ignore them. If you address comments like that, you're giving those boneheads attention and credibility that they don't deserve.

Alex

That's fine in theory, Alex, but there are too many people who buy into the drama, and you just end up with ugly blog comments that go way off topic. Why should they be able to get away with it anyway? Where's the justice? Surely they should be banned from blogs where they write things that are just ridiculous and rude.

Fatimah

Well, even if you banned them, they could just sign up with a new screen name. If you're worried about uncivil responses, you should limit who can see your blog. Put a password on it and only give it out to people you know and trust. One of my friends did that after she started to get weeeeeeeird comments on her blog. Put a password = problem solved.

Guillaume

The trouble is that half the fun of writing a blog – especially if it is about general topics and not tooooo, too personal – is that you've got a wider audience. It's a sad thing if you have to shut that down because of (as Alex puts it) boneheads.

Amanda



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

I think there is a difference between a standard of language (like swearing as if you were around your good friends, compared to being more polite like you would if you were applying for a job) and saying things that are offensive – like racist or sexist, or mean things directed at a person. Either way, clear guidelines are the way to go. Look at this forum – there’s no doubt about what’s okay and what’s not. If you say it at the start, people are more likely to go along with it. Some people just swear and use vulgar language because that’s how they normally talk, not because they want to upset anyone and, if you remind them not to, they probably won’t.

Tony

[Comment deleted – off-topic and inappropriate language]

Wow! Settle down, Simone. This is exactly my point. No one thinks you’re less of a person, just that there are different standards of language for different situations.

Tony

Have you noticed that on some sites where you can leave comments (like after online news stories), people can give a “thumbs up” or a “thumbs down” or flag a comment as inappropriate? Good system. If enough people notice and click, the website moderators will delete the comment. It’s a collective responsibility for all the people using the website to say – “Hey, this is not okay!”

Jessica

There should be a system like an individual code of conduct, right? - like the code of ethics that doctors and journalists and a lot of companies have. And it should apply not only to people leaving comments but also to people who write the blogs in the first place. I mean, there’s heaps of stuff on the web that is weird, mean, nasty, manipulative or just false, but I don’t think that having blog-police is going to help encourage creative expression or interesting discussion or lively debate. We don’t all have to agree on everything, right? We just need to make sure that people take it upon themselves to be decent about what they write and how they respond.

Ben

[Thread now closed.]



Civility definition

Photos



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



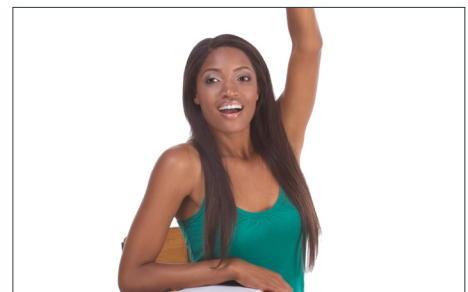
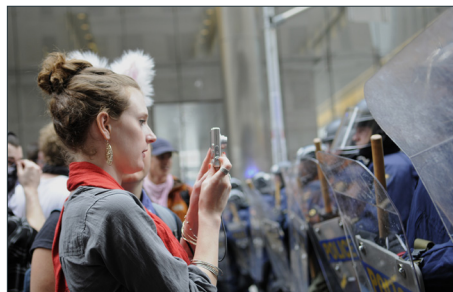
Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics





Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Civility in Advertising ?

Transcript of podcast

Excerpt from *Gentleman's Agreement*, Lux Radio Theatre episode.
Originally broadcast on September 20, 1948.

ANNOUNCER:

Lever Brothers Company, the makers of Lux Flakes, bring you:
The Lux Radio Theatre.
Starring Gregory Peck and Anne Baxter in *Gentleman's Agreement*.

Ladies and gentlemen, your producer, Mr. William Keighley.

APPLAUSE

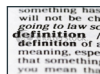
WILLIAM KEIGHLEY:

Greetings from Hollywood, ladies and gentlemen. When I saw the preview of Darryl F. Zanuck's magnificent production of *Gentleman's Agreement*, I marked it down as a must for The Lux Radio Theatre. Based on the exciting novel by Laura Hobson, the Darryl F. Zanuck film won three Academy Awards, including Hollywood's highest honour: The Academy Award for the Best Picture of the Year. Tonight in *Gentleman's Agreement*, Gregory Peck repeats the finely sensitive performance he gave on the screen and co-starred with him is one of our favourites: Anne Baxter.

Many of you have asked for this play in your letters and in the mail the other morning, with some of these requests, was a clipping from a current magazine. It told of what one American missed most in a foreign land: his mother's apple pie, hot dogs, the Brooklyn Dodgers and the Lux Radio Theatre. Well, it's flattering to be considered a symbol of the American way of life. But it's the welcome you have given Lux Flakes in your home that has made the theatre possible. And these days, along with baseball in Brooklyn or apple pie for breakfast in New England, the Lux Radio Theatre is a fixture in the living room, as Lux Flakes are in the kitchen.

It's curtain time for *Gentleman's Agreement* and here's the first act, starring Gregory Peck as *Phil* and Anne Baxter as *Kathy*.

MUSIC



Civility definition



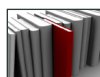
Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Conflicting Views of Civility?

APPLAUSE

ANNOUNCER:

Here's our producer, William Keighley.

WILLIAM KEIGHLEY:

The curtain rises on the third act of *Gentleman's Agreement*, starring Gregory Peck as Phil and Anne Baxter as Kathy.

MUSIC

WILLIAM KEIGHLEY:

A few hours later at the exclusive Flume Inn, Phil Green presents himself at the registration desk.

SOUNDS OF BUSY INN LOBBY

PHIL GREEN:

I have reservations for a double room and bath today through Thursday.

MR. ADAMS (hotel clerk):

What name, please?

PHIL GREEN:

Uh, Green. Phillip Green.

MR. ADAMS:

Oh, yes, Mr. Green. Uh, boy! Mr. Green is ready.

PHIL GREEN:

Uh, just one thing.

MR. ADAMS:

Yes, sir?

PHIL GREEN:

Is this hotel restricted?

MR. ADAMS:

Well, uh, I'd hardly say it was restricted.

PHIL GREEN:

Oh. Then it's *not* restricted.

MR. ADAMS:

Well, um, as a matter of fact --

MR. MACELROY:

Mr. Adams, um, perhaps I can help, Mr. Green. I am the manager, Mr. Green.

PHIL GREEN:

Oh, good.

MR. MACELROY:

In answer to your question, um, may I inquire, are you, uh, that is, uh, do you follow the Hebrew religion yourself or, uh, do you just want to make sure --



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

PHIL GREEN:

Oh, I asked a simple question and I'd like to have a simple answer.

MR. MACELROY:

Oh, I heard, you see, we have a very high-class clientele and, well, naturally --

PHIL GREEN:

Then you do restrict your guests to Gentiles.

MR. MACELROY:

Well, I wouldn't say that, Mr. Green. But, um, in any event there seems to be some mistake because we don't have an available room in the entire hotel. I could put you up in the Brewster Hotel --

PHIL GREEN:

I'm not staying at the Brewster. Look, I'm Jewish and you don't take Jews, that's it, isn't it?

MR. MACELROY:

I never said that.

PHIL GREEN:

If you don't accept Jews, say so!

MR. MACELROY:

Don't you raise your voice to me, Mr. Green, you speak a little more quietly --

PHIL GREEN:

Well, do you or don't you?

SOUND: HOTEL DESK BELL RINGS

HOTEL CLERK:

Yes, Mr. MacElroy?

MR. MACELROY:

Please remove that luggage at once. Good day, Mr. Green.

MUSIC

SOUND: DOOR UNLOCKS

KATHY LACEY:

Phil! Oh, I'm so glad you're back, darling. I, I thought maybe you'd phone.

SOUND OF DOOR CLOSING

PHIL GREEN:

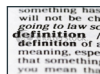
Guess I should have. How's Ma, Kathy?

KATHY LACEY:

Fine, she's sleeping. Tommy's out playing. It was bad, wasn't it? I can tell by your face.

PHIL GREEN:

Well, Dave was right, it was a waste of time. Where is Dave?



Civility definition

KATHY LACEY:

With Ann. He wanted one last night on the town.



Civility Matrix

PHIL GREEN:

I've just been thinking about Dave.

KATHY LACEY:

And about the cottage, Phil? That Dave and his family could live there?



Articles

PHIL GREEN:

Yes.



Podcasts

KATHY LACEY:

I've thought of it, too. You must know that. But it wouldn't work.



Short stories

PHIL GREEN:

Why not?

KATHY LACEY:

Well, it would be just too uncomfortable for Dave in one of those neighbourhoods.



Poems

PHIL GREEN:

One of those *neighbourhoods*.



In the news

KATHY LACEY:

It's detestable, but that's the way it is. It's even worse in New Jordan! There nobody can sell or rent to a Jew. And even in Claremont where Jane's house is and my house is. There's a sort of gentleman's agreement that --



Forum

PHIL GREEN:

Gentleman's -- Kathy, you can't! (Beat) Well, I see. Just give in! Play along! Let their idiotic rules stand!



Photos

KATHY LACEY:

But what can one person do?



Civility in history

PHIL GREEN:

You can tell them to go jump in the lake! What can they do?



Did you know?

KATHY LACEY:

Plenty! They can ostracize Dave. Some of the markets not deliver food. Not even wait on him!



Facts and statistics

PHIL GREEN:

You expect us to live in that cottage now that I know this?

KATHY LACEY:

Face facts, Phil! You know I'm on Dave's side.

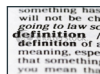
PHIL GREEN:

Well, I'm not on Dave's side or on any side except against *their* side. Kathy, do ya or don't ya believe in this because if you --

SOUND: DOOR OPENING

TOM:

Hi, Pop.



Civility definition

PHIL GREEN:

Tom, do you mind? Kathy and I are talking.



Civility Matrix

TOM:

But, Pop, I -- I --

PHIL GREEN:

Tom! Tom, what's the matter?



Articles

TOM:

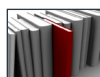
(Crying) They called me a dirty Jew and a dirty kyke and they all ran off and ...



Podcasts

KATHY LACEY:

Oh, darling, it's not true, it's not true! You're no more Jewish than I am. It's just a horrible mistake!



Short stories

PHIL GREEN:

Kathy!

Tom, you come with me. We'll talk about it in here. Now take it easy, son, take it easy.



Poems

SOUND: WATER POURING INTO A GLASS

Glass of water?



In the news

TOM:

Thanks, Pop.



Forum

PHIL GREEN:

How did it happen?



Photos

TOM:

(Upset) I don't know. They said no dirty little Jew could play with 'em, then they ran away! Why, Pop, why?



Civility in history

PHIL GREEN:

Tom, did you wanna tell 'em that you really weren't Jewish?

TOM:

No.



Did you know?

PHIL GREEN:

That's good. You see, there's a lotta kids just like you who are Jewish. And, if you said it, it would be sort of admitting that there was something bad in being Jewish and some thing swell in not.



Facts and statistics

TOM:

They wouldn't even fight, they just ran away!

PHIL GREEN:

Ya, I know. There's a lot of grown-ups just like that, too. Feel better?

TOM:

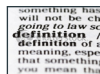
I'm O.K., Pop.

PHIL GREEN:

Atta boy. Look, you go read or something while I talk to Kathy.

TOM:

O.K.



Civility definition

PHIL GREEN:

And, uh, let's keep this to ourselves 'til Grandma's well, huh?



Civility Matrix

TOM:

O.K. Hi, Kathy!

KATHY LACEY:

Hello, Tommy. (beat) Phil?



Articles

PHIL GREEN:

Well?

KATHY LACEY:

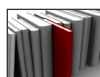
I have something to tell you. I'm pretty tired of feeling wrong. Everything I do or say is wrong about anything Jewish. All I did just now was to face facts about Dave. And for you to tell Tom what you just told him --



Podcasts

PHIL GREEN:

And what did you tell him? That he's the most wonderful of all creatures: a white, non-Jewish American. Why, you instantly gave him that lovely taste of superiority, the poison that millions of parents drop into the minds of millions of children.



Short stories



Poems

KATHY LACEY:

You really think I'm an anti-Semite.



In the news

PHIL GREEN:

No, Kathy, I don't.



Forum

KATHY LACEY:

You do! You've thought it for a long time.



Photos

PHIL GREEN:

No, it's just that I've come to see that lots of nice people who aren't, people who despise and deplore it, help it along and then wonder why it grows! That's the biggest discovery I've made about this whole business. The good people, the nice people!



Civility in history



Did you know?

KATHY LACEY:

Oh, I hate it! I hate everything about this horrible thing. They always make trouble for everybody, even their friends. They force people to take sides against it --



Facts and statistics

PHIL GREEN:

Stop it, Kathy! They didn't suggest this series, they didn't give me the angle, they haven't a single thing to do with what's happened between you and me!

KATHY LACEY:

Don't shout at me! And don't treat me to any more lessons in tolerance. I'm sick of it! I'm not going to marry into a house that's shouting and nerves. And you might as well know it now.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

PHIL GREEN:

Please, I, I'm sorry I shouted. I hate it when I do.

KATHY LACEY:

It's not just the shouting, Phil. Now I know why I drew back when you first mentioned the angle. But you are what you are for the one life you have. You can't help it if you were born Gentile instead of Jew. It doesn't mean you're glad about it. But *I'm* glad. It would be terrible! I'm glad I'm not! But I could never make you understand that. But it's a fact! Like being glad you're good-looking instead of ugly. Rich instead of poor! Well instead of sick. (Beat) I hate you for doing this, Phil. We could have been so happy. We had so much to enjoy, so much to share. I hate you for taking it away (Beat) from both of us.

MUSIC

END OF ACT 3



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Can We Learn About Civility From The Past?



Once upon a time, it was important to:

- stand up when someone, especially someone older, entered a room
- always open doors for ladies
- remove your hat to acknowledge important people
- remove your hat indoors if you are a man
- write a thank-you note as soon as possible whenever you receive a gift
- smile and have a pleasant facial expression
- have a serious expression when the situation requires
- keep your nails clean
- keep your hands and teeth clean
- cough and sneeze into a handkerchief
- keep both feet on the floor when sitting
- allow other people to go through doorways first, especially if they are older
- express your opinions politely
- dress discretely
- talk discretely

Once upon a time, it was considered impolite to:

- spit on the fire
- turn your back on others, especially when you were speaking to them
- sing or hum to yourself
- tap or drum on a table
- fall asleep in public
- draw attention to others' handicaps or physical problems
- stick out your tongue
- bite your lips in public
- keep your mouth open in public
- laugh too loudly in public
- stand too close to the person to whom you are speaking
- show pleasure in the misfortune of others
- talk about sad events on a happy occasion
- draw attention to yourself when walking down the street
- address your boss or your teacher by his/her first name
- let your elbows touch the dinner table
- arrive late
- apply lipstick or other make-up in public
- have a gift registry for a wedding



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Did You Know?...



Did you know that . . .

- many businesses, restaurants, and other organizations can legally enforce a dress code? Men are expected to wear a business suit and tie, and women a suit, pant suit or a conservative dress. Outside the business environment, casual clothes are acceptable in most situations, with the exception of some restaurants and hotel lounges where beachwear and any clothing depicting violence or associated with any recognized violent group are prohibited. In addition, caps, sneakers and baggy pants won't get you into certain clubs. Private schools have the right to insist on a uniform.
- the city of Montréal prohibits anyone from disturbing people in a residential building with excessive noise? A police officer may order anyone causing a disturbance to stop. Anyone who does not obey immediately is violating the by-law and is liable to a fine of up to \$1,000.
- there are no specific laws against road rage? This kind of aggressive driving is considered a failure to obey existing traffic laws. The perception that road rage has increased in recent years, however, does not appear to be substantiated by facts. Existing studies do not solidly confirm this perception which appears mainly in public opinion polls. According to experts, it is difficult to assess this objectively because it is hard to interpret the intention of drivers on the basis of observed behaviour; for example, what might appear to be rude behaviour may be the result of distraction.
- Québec has banned cellphone use by drivers? Studies indicate that there is a serious increase in accidents by drivers using cellphones.
- citizens of Québec must come to the aid of anyone whose life is in peril? They must do this personally by calling for aid or by giving the necessary and immediate physical assistance, unless it involves danger to themselves or a third person, or they have another valid reason. At the very least, people must contact the police. A Good Samaritan law was featured in a popular situation comedy, *Seinfeld*, in which the main characters were prosecuted and sentenced to one year in jail for not helping a man who was getting robbed at gunpoint.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

- respect and civility must be part of all work places and other environments?
Sections 10 and 15 of the Québec and Canadian Charters of Human Rights and Freedoms, respectively, describe moral harassment as discriminatory if it is based on one of the following grounds: racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, or political or religious beliefs. Harassment and attacks on dignity are referred to arbitration tribunals.
- the state of California has some unique civility laws, such as:
 - 1) Peacocks have the right of way to cross any street including driveways;
 - 2) It is illegal to spit except on baseball diamonds;
 - 3) It is prohibited to sleep in a parked vehicle;
 - 4) One may not bring a dog to school; and
 - 5) Sandboxes may not be used as ashtrays?
- Canada also has some little known civility laws, such as:
 - 1) Citizens may not publicly remove bandages;
 - 2) Homeowners are responsible for clearing snow off municipal sidewalks;
 - 3) The color of house and garage doors is regulated by city bylaws
(a purple door will get you a fine);
 - 4) You can't work on your car in the street; and
 - 5) It is illegal to climb trees?



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Quotations About Civility



Three things in human life are important:
The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind.
And the third is to be kind.

Henry James

Rudeness is the weak man's imitation
of strength.

Eric Hoffer

Generation Me has grown up believing that it is
more important to do your own thing than to
conform to the group. Unfortunately, that also
means that people of this generation are more
likely to be inconsiderate of other people.

Jean Twenge

If anything characterizes the twenty-first century it is our inability to restrain ourselves
for the benefit of other people.

James Katz

Civility consists in concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little
we think of the other person.

Mark Twain

Civility costs nothing and buys everything.

Mary Worley Montagu

Teaching civility is an obligation of the family.

Stephen Carter

We cannot do democracy without a heavy dose of civility.

Mike Pence

Civility is only a passenger - not a driver - on the information super highway.

Don Rittner

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return
to kindness or decency.

Samuel Johnson

There can be no high civility without a deep morality.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Civility definition

I think the frightening thing is when we lose our civility, which I think is happening across the board...As citizens we have to be more thoughtful and more educated and more informed. I turn on the TV and I see these grown people screaming at each other, and I think if we don't get our civility back, we're in trouble.

Emmylou Harris



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts

Civility is to human nature what warmth is to wax.

Arthur Shopenhauer



Short stories

Friendship cannot live with ceremony, nor without civility.

Lord Halifax



Poems

The civility of no race can be perfect whilst another race is degraded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

P. M. Forni's Twenty-five Rules for Personal Civility

- 1) Pay attention
- 2) Acknowledge others
- 3) Think the best
- 4) Listen
- 5) Be inclusive
- 6) Speak kindly
- 7) Don't speak ill
- 8) Accept and give praise
- 9) Respect even a subtle "no"
- 10) Respect others' opinions
- 11) Mind your body
- 12) Be agreeable
- 13) Keep it down and rediscover silence
- 14) Respect other people's time
- 15) Respect other people's space
- 16) Apologize earnestly
- 17) Assert yourself
- 18) Avoid personal questions
- 19) Care for your guests
- 20) Be a considerate guest
- 21) Think twice before asking favours
- 22) Refrain from idle complaints
- 23) Accept and give constructive criticism
- 24) Respect the environment and be gentle to animals
- 25) Don't shift responsibility and blame

From: Forni, P.M. (2002).

Choosing Civility: The Twenty-five Rules of Considerate Conduct. New York: New York, St. Martin's Press.



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Statistics on Incivility

“We’re Ruder Than Ever, Poll Finds... ‘It’s about the daily assault of selfish, inconsiderate behavior that gets under people’s skin on the highways, in the office, on TV, in stores and the myriad other settings where they encounter fellow Americans.”

(April 3, 2002, Deborah Wadsworth, Pres. Public Agenda Research Group, reported on ABCNEWS.com)

In the study mentioned above, nearly eight in 10 respondents said lack of respect and courtesy is a serious national problem; 61% agreed that there was more rude behavior than in the past; people blamed parents for not instilling courtesy in their children, and popular culture for encouraging rude behavior.

(April 3, 2002, Public Agenda Research Group, reported on ABCNEWS.com)

Check this out: 9 out of 10 of us (88%) feel that incivility is a serious problem and getting worse. And 9 out of 10 Americans think that incivility increases opportunities for violence.

(Bozell Worldwide/US News & World Report Civility in America Study 1999)

Imagine, 85% of us feel that the world would be a better place if we just said “please” and “thank you” more often.

(ABCNEWS/World Tonight Poll May 1999)

Cellphone rudeness is the #1 complaint of diners.

(Zagat Restaurant Survey)

Fifty-nine percent of people would rather visit the dentist than sit next to someone using a cell phone.

(USA Today, July 28, 1999)

One psychologist says that cellphones are a way of minimizing the importance of the group...cell phone people are telling the rest of us that “You don’t matter and I’m very important.”

(Dr. Joseph Miller, New School for Social Research)

A national “last-straw” survey of anger in the workplace shows that 42% of respondents said yelling and verbal abuse took place where they worked. 29% admitted that they themselves had yelled at co-workers.

(Integra Realty Resources Study on “Desk Rage”)



Civility definition

Aggressive drivers (drivers who tailgate, exceed speed limits, run red lights, and switch lanes with no warning) contribute to the more than 6 million crashes in the U.S. each year.

(National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)



Civility Matrix



Articles

Can't get anyone in the store to wait on you? Lack of customer respect is the root of every common service complaint.

(Texas A & M University Center for Retailing Studies)



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news

Sports stars publicly display so much anger and violence on and off the court – these are role models? They beat each other, run each other down with cars... and how about spitting in a baseball umpire's face, head-butting a basketball referee, choking a baseball coach, bat-throwing, ear biting, and worse... "Sideline rage" with parents behaving badly at youth sports events is such an epidemic, that 76% of respondents from 60 high school athletic associations said increased spectator interference is causing many officials to quit.

(Associated Press, 6/3/01)



Forum

Abuse accounts for about 10 percent of the injuries to children under age 7 who are examined in emergency rooms.

(American Psychological Assoc., Facts About Family Violence)



Photos



Civility in history

An estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to violence by family members against their mothers or female caretakers.

(American Psychological Assoc., Facts About Family Violence)



Did you know?

While 58 countries retained the death penalty in 2009, most did not use it. Eighteen countries were known to have carried out executions, killing a total of at least 714 people; however, this figure does not include China, which refused to divulge figures on its use of the death penalty. Methods of execution in 2009 included hanging, shooting, beheading, stoning, electrocution and lethal injection. The countries with the highest numbers of executions were Iran (388), Iraq (120), Saudi Arabia (69), USA (52), Yemen (30), Sudan (9), Vietnam (9), Syria (8), Japan (7).

(Amnesty International: Death Sentences and Executions in 2009)



Facts and statistics



Civility definition



Civility Matrix



Articles



Podcasts



Short stories



Poems



In the news



Forum



Photos



Civility in history



Did you know?



Facts and statistics

Violence and American youth was the subject of a recent national survey that found 43% of high school and 37% of middle school boys believe it is OK to hit or threaten a person who makes them angry. Nearly one in five (19%) of the girls agree.

The same national survey found that 75% of all boys and over 60% of teenaged girls said they hit someone in the past 12 months because they were angry.

(Josephson Institute of Ethics)

In a survey of elementary students, 70% of students reported being bullied, while the staff estimated that 7% were victims of bullies. At the middle school level, 66% of students said they had been bullied, while the staff estimated 8% of students were being bullied. This suggests the staff doesn't recognize what the kids in the school are facing

(Earlychildhood.com, Dr. Mary Drecktrah and Lisa Blaskowski, Univ. of WI, Oshkosh)

Dramatic displays of dishonesty are on the rise at the U of T, where the highest academic court, which hears only the most severe cases, received 38 new complaints in 2008-9, up from 21 the year before. The surge may partly reflect a larger trend cited recently in the report "Liars, Fraudsters and Cheats" by the Canadian Council on Learning, which found nearly three in four students in this country say they have cheated at least once, thanks to the cut-and-paste wizardry of the web and the trend to file-sharing almost everything.

<http://educationanditsdiscontents.blogspot.com>